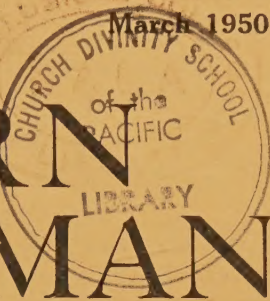


Vol. XL, No. 1

THE MODERN CHURCHMAN



By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make
orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*.

EDITOR : H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D., F.S.A.

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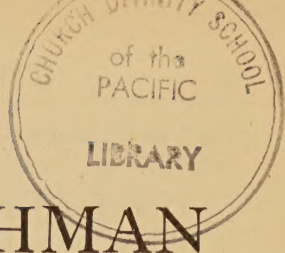
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A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke*.

No. 1

MARCH

VOL. XL

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

THE BURGOMASTER OF ROTTERDAM ON THE CHRISTIAN SITUATION

Faith and Freedom (Autumn, 1949) publishes an article by Dr. P. J. Oud, Burgomaster of Rotterdam, under the heading 'A Layman's View of Liberal Christianity.' Its writer, once again, presents the Christian convictions, not of the man in the pulpit (he is always with us) nor of the man in the pew (who is silently deserting it), but the man who, having lost his Christian orthodoxy, as the ecclesiastics understand it, has not only retained his Christian faith but has enlarged it. For him

'the principal thing in Christianity is the spirit of Christ. The spirit which has to live in us as Holy Spirit and which has to point out to us the way we have to follow in our behaviour towards God and men.'

The Burgomaster reads his Bible but he is no Bibliolater. For he finds his supreme inspiration for the guidance of his life enshrined in the principles of Christ.

Bismarck's *dictum*, 'We cannot govern with the Sermon on the Mount,' carries no weight with the Burgomaster. He holds that the only sound way to govern is with the Sermon on the Mount, not by literal obedience to its precepts but by loyalty to its principles interpreted in the light of our modern knowledge and modern needs. Without the love of God and without the love of man in the hearts of those who govern, there is no hope for the future of mankind. Love, however, must be no mere emotionalism but essentially ethical and scientific.

The Catholic traditionalist may ask, Where in this religion does Christ come in? The answer is, He does not come in at all. He is there all the while. As the Burgomaster asserts (it is not his

own definition), Christ is 'the central value in the history of the world.'

Others will ask, Where does St. Paul come in? The answer is, Where he would wish to come in, and that is where he has 'the mind of Christ' for the prophetic interpretation of the existing situation. There are a number of Pauline solutions of practical and doctrinal problems which have no final authority for us to-day, ranging from the silence to be observed by married women in church to what is to happen to the dead at the Apocalyptic Advent of Christ.

The Bible contains many moral and spiritual pearls, but the most precious of them all is the pearl of great price, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus. But these pearls are often concealed in heaps of oyster shells. For purposes of human salvation to-day, the pearls must be separated from the Biblical oyster shells or they are bound to be rejected with the oyster shells by a world which, whether competitive or communist, must be offered only the very best religion if that world is to be converted to faith in the Spirit of Christ. This the Burgomaster sees clearly:

'There are millions of people in the world to-day who have lost, along with their belief in the dogmas of the orthodox creed, their belief in God as well. The Church has no significance for them.'

What is to be done about it? It seems to us that if the Church is not prepared to become primarily the Church of the Spirit of Christ and the Church of the Kingdom of God, and open its doors much wider than at present so as to admit the Burgomaster's millions of friends, the existing organized Churches will have to be by-passed and new spiritual fellowships created to replace them. For of all religions the Christian Religion, as the religion of love, must put fellowship and spiritual freedom first. The Burgomaster's practical conclusion is this:

'It is our task to point out that it isn't necessary to believe in all the dogmas of the orthodox creed. But that it is enough to believe in the Spirit of Christ. This message should be able to bring back to Christianity thousands of people who along with their belief in orthodoxy have lost all faith.' (p. 5.)

A SOUTH AFRICAN SCIENTIST ON THE CHRISTIAN SITUATION

The *Hibbert Journal* (January, 1950) publishes an article entitled 'The "Good" Life' by T. W. B. Osborn, D.Sc., D.Phil., a former Rhodes Scholar at Trinity College, Oxford; one of

South Africa's 'most brilliant and devoted sons,' a physician and politician, who died on June 26, 1949, at the age of 44. In this article Dr. Osborn shows himself to be a spiritual fellow-traveller with the Burgomaster of Rotterdam, although we have no reason to believe they ever met in the flesh.

Although his scientific and political interests were enthralling, it is clear that underlying them all was something which possessed an even greater claim—the 'good' life. It seemed clear to him that although those around him had many interests and activities in their lives they had no ideal of the 'good' life capable of claiming and concentrating their loyalty. He asks, Why is this? Is it because they lack courage, energy, enterprise, self-sacrifice? There seem to him to be many possessed of all these qualities who yet lacked any supreme loyalty to the 'good' life. They lacked the conviction that such a 'good' life really exists to claim their loyalty. But why is it that when the modern man most needs the stars for navigation he cannot see them? It is due to the fog. This fog has been created by vast masses of new knowledge getting mixed up with masses of inherited traditions and conventions. As a result there are three types of reaction.

(1) Do nothing about it. 'It's no worse than it's always been.' To this Dr. Osborn replies:

'The result of this policy means extinction for Western Christian man—all communities of animals and man which have failed to react and adapt themselves to changed circumstances, always have been liquidated.'

(2) 'Do what we're doing now but do it harder'—the ecclesiastical 'tightening-up' policy.

'They think that putting greater fervour and more intense effort into present conventional Christianity will turn retreat into advance. They do score sporadic successes—they win a few battles—but the war is going steadily against them.'

(3) 'Put the clock back.'

This school 'would discourage scepticism and bring back in their full authority the simple do's and don'ts of earlier religious teachers. This plan would mean putting blinkers on education—a retreat from the liberal tradition in education. The plan is embarrassed by the fact that each sect has a different set of do's and don'ts.' (p. 132.)

'All these rearguard actions must fail in the end. The retreat from religion will be stopped only by a new point of view, and a completely new approach. This is not possible while the leaders of religion maintain a narrow "legal" attitude to ethics. Law is very necessary to prevent dangerous departures from an accepted code of behaviour and to enforce the basic obligations which any state must demand from its citizens.'

Beyond that a codified legal pattern of rules of behaviour is suitable for guiding the personal behaviour of children and of completely ignorant and unsophisticated adults, but it cannot work for the average educated man of modern civilized communities. It cannot work because the average man will not believe in any such code, no matter how much pressure is put on him by the authorities and by his own urge to keep in step with the herd.' (p. 132.)

Dr. Osborn finds the ideal and inspiration of the 'good' life in the principles contained in the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. Basically it is love to God and love to man, but not treated as legal regulations and obeyed in that spirit. We are sure that this was precisely the spiritual and moral liberation aimed at by Jesus Himself. Dr. Osborn is convinced that conduct should be viewed not as the rigidly right and the rigidly wrong. Do we not owe to Robert Burns the *dictum*, 'The rigid righteous is a fool'?

Dr. Osborn suggests the aesthetic attitude towards ethics — 'becoming behaviour,' noble personality. Here Dr. Osborn is supported by another authority, John Keats, who viewed this world as a 'vale of soul-making.' We are reminded of a saying of Jesus: 'Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.' But how is this to be implemented? Dr. Osborn writes of a crusade:

'If a crusade could be started for better living, comparable with but on a vastly greater scale than the campaigns which have been run from time to time for better art, better writing, better music — if a vast new study of the aesthetics of behaviour could be initiated on a basis of what is "becoming" and not of "it is either right or it's wrong" — if the watchword became once again "*manners makyth man*," and we discard our "all-or-nothing" mania in ethics — if these changes could be brought about we might see a revolution in human living greater and more exalting by far than any material or political revolution we have had. The men are there to lead this crusade.' (p. 133.)

Among the men to lead this crusade Dr. Osborn assigns an influential place to the Christian clergy, but he is convinced that they will have to be liberated and united to become really effective.

We cannot do without the Christian religion in implementing the 'good' life, but the problem facing the Christian Churches and Western civilization is whether we shall have to institute new organizations to implement the Christian life. We favour, not the creation of new religious organizations, but the steady improvement in moral and spiritual education of the leaders of the historic Christian Churches, and here we must emphasize that if ethics needs aesthetics it needs even more spirituality. The great Christian mystics, the Cambridge Platonists, the Society of Friends enforce that need, and Jesus Himself most of all. Dr.

Osborn's Crusade can have no more inspiring Captain of Salvation than the Martyr of the Kingdom of God.

THE MENACE OF PAPAL TOTALITARIANISM

The New York *Churchman* of January 1, 1950, publishes an article by C. Stanley Lowell on the Roman Catholic menace to religious liberty in the United States. Mr. Lowell's text is derived from the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII dealing with the relations of Church and State which emphasize that *the State exists for the Church*.

The basis for this papal claim is explicitly stated thus in a recent issue of the official organ of the Jesuits published in Rome :

'The Roman Catholic Church, convinced (that it is) the only true church, must demand the right to freedom for herself alone, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error. As to other religions . . . *the church will require that they shall not be allowed to propagate false doctrine.* . . . Whenever it can, the church will require that legal existence be denied to error.'

Mr. Lowell expands the practical application of the Jesuit theory as follows :

'The article goes on to state that in some countries where Romanists are in the minority they will be too weak to suppress other faiths. In these situations the Romanists are to insist on all possible concessions for themselves, hoping for the day when they will be able to deny other minorities the very rights that were accorded to them. The statement ends by saying : "The Roman church would betray her trust if she were to proclaim that error (that is Protestantism) can have the same rights as truth (Romanism)."

'I once asked a Jesuit priest if this really represented the aim of Rome. He admitted that it did, but added : "It will be a long time before Catholics are in a majority in the United States and we are able to establish a true church-state relationship here." That is to say, we Protestants need not worry until it's too late !

'There is no doubt about what Rome wants. We have an excellent made-to-order demonstration in General Franco's Spain. In that country Franco treats Protestants exactly as the Pope thinks they ought to be treated. No Protestant services are permitted public notice. Groups meet in private homes, even as early Christians met in the catacombs. But even here they are spied on and their meetings are reported. Police break up the services, arrest the participants and the courts impose heavy fines or prison terms. . . . Protestants are not permitted to have a funeral service. They may not reply in the press to attacks made upon them.'

We are not concerned here to criticize the papalist claims on behalf of truth. What we are concerned with is the *method* which the papalist claims to use in the cause of truth. The anti-papalist cannot, as a lover of freedom, forbid freedom to the papalist to speak and preach the truth as the papalist sees it, but the

anti-papalist ought, as a lover of freedom, to take every precaution to prevent those who refuse to accept papal propaganda from being subjected to penalties because of their rejection of papalism.

Our British political problem is complicated by the fact that papalism is a political power in addition to being a religious community, and that the head of this papal power can and does in certain cases claim a loyalty from its adherents which can bring them into conflict with the ideals and policy of the State of which these papalists are citizens. This is why our British Constitution is compelled to maintain not only that 'The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England,' but also to prohibit any Roman Catholic from sitting on the throne or being appointed Lord Chancellor, as the Lord Chancellor is the 'keeper of the King's conscience.'

This constitutes the maximum of political disabilities imposed on adherents of the Papacy within this realm. If papal propaganda is to be checked it has to be by educational methods, not by legal penalties. And that because we are convinced that truth cannot secure its proper influence if it be not allied to freedom. That was all John Milton claimed for truth :

'For who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty? She needs no policies, no stratagems, nor licencings to make her victorious.
... Give her but room.'

THE THIRTY LIBERATORS

Not the least striking characteristic of English civilization is the debt which it owes in every sphere to the contribution made by voluntary societies, not by officialdom but by the enterprise of individuals. These apostles of education, science, commerce, culture, religion have developed the finest flowers of British civilization. To-day the number of these societies is legion, but we cannot have too many of them.

Such a society is the Christian Frontier Council. The society was founded in 1942. It is closely associated in its ideals and services with the Ecumenical movement, the Student Christian Movement and the British Council of Churches, but it is in no way subject to them. The Christian Frontier Council consists of thirty members of whom one of the most distinguished is Sir Walter Moberly, who produced his notable book, *The Crisis in the University*, under the auspices of the Council. Until the summer of 1949 the Council was responsible for the publication of *The Christian News Letter*, which was edited first by Dr. J. H. Oldham and then by Dr. Kathleen Bliss. This magazine was much valued by its readers but circumstances compelled its cessation.

We are glad to note that a new magazine, *The Frontier*,¹ has come into existence to replace it. The *Frontier* will deal with the results of the researches and discussions of its Council and those whom they associate with them. The first number of the *Frontier* thus describes the methods proposed by its founders :

'Without committing or being controlled by ecclesiastical authority, Christian men and women are free to co-operate with one another, and with others who do not share their faith, in exploring the various fields of social responsibility and action.'

The editors of the *Frontier* are Philip Mairet and Alec Vidler ; its publisher is Basil Blackwell. Canon Vidler (8 The Cloisters, Windsor Castle), a loyal disciple of F. D. Maurice, until recently the able editor of *Theology*, is well known to many.

The contributions to the first number are permeated, as might be anticipated, by the spirit of comprehensiveness, freedom, friendship and insight. The titles of its articles indicate this :

- 'One Word, Many Cultures, One Church,' by George Every ;
- 'Human Rights,' by Kenneth G. Grubb ;
- 'Goethe : the Bicentenary Reviewed,' by Reginald Snell.

ANGLO-CATHOLIC DISRUPTION

The relations of the South India Church to the Church of England still cause anxiety to our Church authorities. The Rev. Michael Bruce, a Proctor of the Convocation of Canterbury, voiced this anxiety in an address delivered at the Annual Conference of the Council for the Defence of Church Principles. In this address Mr. Bruce expressed his conviction that if laxity were permitted in the interpretation of the Creeds by ministers of the South India Church, the Church of England would have to face disruption by an influential section of Anglo-Catholics.

The cause for this apprehension is due to the liberal interpretation which is being given to the following clause contained in the proposed scheme of Union in the Constitution of the South India Church :

'The uniting Churches accept the fundamental truths embodied in the Creeds (Apostles' and Nicene) named above as providing a sufficient basis of union ; but do not intend thereby to demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in them or to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation, or to assert that those Creeds are a complete expression of the Christian faith.' (Proposed Scheme of Union, p. 5.)

¹ *The Frontier*. January, 1950. Vol. I, No. 1. Annual subscription 20s. Publisher, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

The Anglo-Catholic protest, voiced by Mr. Bruce, has elicited two important letters from Anglican Bishops of undoubted orthodoxy. Bishop Hollis of Madras wrote :

‘ Behind every suggestion is the attempt to insist that every candidate for baptism shall at least want to believe every clause of the Creeds and that every candidate for ordination shall believe every clause. That I am sure for myself we cannot accept. We are facing here the biggest difference, I suspect, between us. It concerns the nature of faith, the problem of authority and the attitude of the Church to these or any other creeds and confessions.

‘ I doubt whether the traditionalist realizes yet the extent to which the changed attitude to the Bible demands a radical re-examination of the whole problem of authority. It is not enough to say that doctors or councils taught thus. If the reason in any instance is that they were expounding Scripture, then the question for us to-day, as it was not for them, is whether Scripture here is right or wrong or, it may be, literal or symbolic. The Article says that the Creeds ‘ ought thoroughly to be received and believed : for they may be proved by most sure warrants of holy Scripture.’ That to-day is not sufficient, nor can the authority of the Church or of Councils replace that authority of Scripture. We have got to ask how far they are true.

‘ The moment you admit a distinction between the truth which the statement is designed to safeguard or assert and the statement itself, then you cannot rigidly demand that everyone accepts or wants to accept every clause of the Creeds. People brought up to assent to traditional formulae are seldom aware of the extent to which they reinterpret them or of the strain which such proceedings put upon the honesty of others who approach the matter differently.

‘ The second matter is that we must, I believe, recognize that there are certain essential saving truths or saving acts, and that not all the statements in the Creeds fall into the first class. I am not prepared to allow that a man who will not say that the Virgin Birth is a historical fact and who does not want to believe that it is (who in fact sees what seem to him adequate reasons for disbelieving it), but who can, for example, wholeheartedly assent to the witness of *John* i, 1-18, is to be refused baptism or even admission into the ministry. That Jesus Christ is a historical unique figure, the saving act of God, and that He is alive as no other figure who appeared in the past is alive to-day, can be believed without always accepting either the Virgin Birth or the empty tomb. It may be that perfect understanding of the logical implications of belief in the Incarnation would show that the traditional accompaniments are literal fact and not symbol. That vision is not granted to human minds and there remains a large and necessary agnosticism. The present indiscriminate use of the Creeds too often fixes men’s minds upon secondary clauses and leads to the rejection of the vital truth. No one to-day is likely to believe in miracles in general or in the Virgin Birth in particular unless he first knows that Jesus Christ is a unique figure in his life and in human history.

‘ We have got to face the question of the root meaning of faith. The approach of this group seems to me vitiated all through by the unwillingness to recognize the extent to which “catholicism,” in the sense in which they use it, is built upon an unscriptural and intellectualist conception of faith. It shows itself by their inability to understand what is

meant by justification by faith and their shrinking from *sola fide* as the human response to God's *sola gratia*. Whatever Luther's limitations and exaggerations there he brought us back to the root of the matter, and the "catholic" tradition has never grasped how much his witness was needed or what fundamental re-thinking of the traditional system it demands.'

The second letter comes from Bishop Legg, who wrote as follows :

'I am in general agreement with Bishop Hollis's reply, especially paragraphs 3 and 4. I am quite prepared to admit that some phrases in the scheme might be improved, but doubt the usefulness of this line of approach without more agreement first in the nature of the Church and of faith, and the relative importance of a meticulous intellectual definition of fine doctrinal points as compared with personal faith, public worship, and practical life and activity. One phrase may be added to another, but each tends to call for a further phrase to clarify it. Bruce's warning that these points are only an instalment raises the question as to how far the Church of South India would be willing to embark on an extensive process of revision at present. My main comment is that I do not think truth can be safeguarded in the way Bruce seems to think. Truth can only be safeguarded in an atmosphere of liberty. Without liberty . . . what is safeguarded is not truth, but a lifeless tradition.'

We hope the sweet reasonableness of these two letters and the quality of insight and foresight evinced in them will check any movement towards disruption by our Anglo-Catholic recalcitrants.

MODERN CHURCHMEN ON DIVORCE AND RE-MARRIAGE

The following important statement by the Council of the Modern Churchmen's Union has been authorized for publication :

The pressure, which is now being exerted by the Convocations of the Church of England and by individual Bishops to deprive the clergy of the discretionary powers guaranteed to them by Act of Parliament in dealing with the marriage in church of divorced persons and their subsequent admission to Holy Communion, constitutes a challenge both to law and liberty.

If the will of Convocation, expressed in various resolutions, is to prevail, no marriage of divorced persons, innocent or guilty, will take place in church, and, if the will of many individual Bishops is to prevail, no divorced person, innocent or guilty, will be admitted to Holy Communion, until the Bishop himself has held a court of enquiry into the matter; whose decision shall be guided by considerations laid down by himself.

But the law, as defined in the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1937, in removing the compulsion which formerly lay upon the clergyman to marry the innocent party and lend his church if required for the marriage of the guilty, clearly provides that, though compulsion disappears, his discretion remains.

'No clergyman of the Church of England or of the Church of Wales shall be compelled to solemnize the marriage of any person whose former marriage has been dissolved on any ground and whose former husband

or wife is still living or to permit the marriage of any such person to be solemnized in the church or chapel of which he is minister.' Convocation now seeks to make these words read (in practice): '*No clergyman shall be permitted to celebrate the marriage of such persons . . .*'

Again, with regard to the admission of divorced persons to Holy Communion, the discretion of the clergyman is clearly laid down in the rubric of the Holy Communion office, which constitutes the law of the Church of England and the law of the realm on this matter. It is the clergyman who must notify 'the open and notorious evil liver' 'that he presume not to come to the Lord's Table.' If such a thing is to be done at all, it is the clergyman who must take the grave responsibility of telling the person in his parish, whom the State has legally re-married and who desires to receive the Holy Communion, 'not to come to the Lord's Table.' Both the discretion and the responsibility are his, and he must be prepared to face the legal consequences of his action. The law knows nothing of such further courts of enquiry as the Bishop may desire to set up.

In view of this two-fold threat to law and liberty, the Council of the Modern Churchmen's Union recently passed the following resolution:

'That

- (1) In the light of New Testament teaching taken as a whole, of the tradition of the Church of England, and of the civil law, it is the duty of the parochial clergy to fulfil their legal, moral, and spiritual responsibilities towards parishioners by conscientiously exercising their right of discretion in cases where divorced persons desire marriage in church.
- (2) The primary responsibility for excluding any person from Holy Communion lies on the parochial clergy, who are liable to serious legal penalties unless they exercise their responsibility within strictly defined limits.'

It is important that the present state of the law should be more widely known, as it concerns both laity and clergy alike. Church people, whose marriages have been dissolved, can still hope to be re-married in church when the discretion of the clergyman allows it. Clergy who, after careful enquiry and with knowledge of the facts, have decided to exercise such discretion, are at liberty to do so, in spite of the pressure now being exerted to prevent them. They are equally at liberty to admit divorced persons to Holy Communion, when they are satisfied about the sincerity of the intention. It is their business to prevent the Christian standard of marriage being so rigidly applied that in the end it produces un-Christian results.

The Church of England has recently undertaken the formidable task of revising the Canon law. It seeks to make it operative in the future for clergy and laity alike. Canons dealing with the law of marriage will naturally be amongst the most important of those presented eventually for the Royal Assent. If the extremists in the Church of England, who seek to equate Anglican doctrine with Roman, have their way, a serious crisis may arise within the Church itself and in its relation to the State. The Christian public should direct its attention more carefully to the course which these proceedings are now taking.

Besides the widespread publication in the Press of the above statement on Divorce and Re-marriage, it is important that

constituents should personally approach their representatives in Parliament in directing their attention to the dangers which lurk in parliamentary sanction being granted to the new Canons, particularly as those Canons seek to impose their authority on the laity as well as on the clergy of the Church of England. Never was there greater need in our Church life of the warning uttered by the judicious Hooker in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*:

'I would not basely through silence allow things to pass away as in a dream.'

THE 'LIFE OF LIVES'

A valuable article by Professor A. M. Hunter of Aberdeen on 'The Life of Christ in the Twentieth Century' is published in the *Expository Times* of February, 1950. It is a brilliant and amazingly concise presentation of the contributions made by ten selected 'Lives of Jesus' published in England during the last half-century. Of course many lives of Jesus and many volumes making important contributions to the understanding of His mission and message have had to be excluded from this article. But what has been selected for comment is both constructive and instructive.

Professor Hunter begins with Sanday's *Outlines of the Life of Christ* (1905) and concludes with Rudolf Otto's *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man* (E.T. 1938). Under the exacting limitations of a magazine article it forms a sequel to Schweitzer's famous *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*. Having summarized the conservative and apologetic contributions of Sanday and Denny, Dr. Hunter passes to the bombshell contribution of Schweitzer translated into English under the title *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* in 1910. A new era in the exposition of Jesus and His Gospel opened with this volume. Dr. Hunter thus describes its significant contribution:

'The real Jesus (said Schweitzer) was a strange imperious figure obsessed by an apocalyptic dream in which the "birth pangs" of the New Age, the Parousia, the Last Judgment and the supernatural Kingdom of God followed each other in swift succession. He died to make that dream come true. Though from the Baptism he knew he would be the Messiah, he kept it secret. When he sent out the Twelve, he expected the End of the World would come before they had been round the cities of Israel (Mt. x, 23). When it did not happen, he altered his forecast. Convinced now that he must endure the pangs himself and die if the end were to come, he marched on Jerusalem not of his own free will but of dogmatic necessity. The secret of Messiahship, disclosed to the Twelve at Caesarea Philippi, was betrayed by Judas to the priests, and Jesus flung himself on the Cross, hoping that his death would force God to bring all to pass. *Deo aliter visum*. He died in dereliction. That is

his victory. But what of his ethical teaching? That, replies Schweitzer, was only "an ethic of the interval"—till the supernatural kingdom came. The Kingdom itself needs no ethics.

'It is a shattering picture. But is it true? Four grave charges can be levelled against it. (1) Schweitzer uses his sources uncritically. His exegesis practically begins and ends with *Matthew*, particularly *Mt. x, 23*, a saying of very dubious value. (2) He turns a Nelson eye on all evidence in the Synoptics which proclaims the Kingdom a present reality in the ministry of Jesus. (3) He makes nonsense of the ethic of Jesus. And (4) he makes Jesus the deluded victim of a fixed eschatological programme.

'If Schweitzer says that the Liberal Jesus never existed, we may retort that his eschatological Jesus never did either. Yet Schweitzer did one really important thing: he compelled scholars to face up to the problem of eschatology in the Gospels, and challenged them to produce a better interpretation than his own. Every writer since 1910 has had to meet that challenge.' (p. 132.)

What follows in Professor Hunter's article expands this theme and, as it seems to us, with critical cogency.

LICKING THE CHALICE

The *Oxford Mail* of December 23, 1949, publishes selections from the Christmas message of a Derbyshire vicar to his parishioners on their attendance at the midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. In his message he deprecates the use of lipstick by women communicants, giving as one of his reasons that 'it is the duty of the priest to cleanse the chalice with his tongue after the communion of the people.'

Public reference by an English clergyman to his practice of this repellent mediaeval custom is surely to be deplored. It was definitely prohibited at the Reformation by our Church authorities. Our martyred Bishop Ridley of London in his *Injunctions* of 1550 forbids it as follows:

'that no minister do counterfeit the popish mass in kissing the Lord's Board, washing his hands or fingers after the gospel, or receipt of holy communion . . . laying down and *licking the chalice* after the communion . . . ' (p. 177, *The Remains of the Eucharist*, by W. Lockton C.U.P., 1920.)

It would amaze those who are not liturgical antiquaries to learn of the development and variety of ablutions connected with the service of Holy Communion.

Originally the ablutions of Communion vessels took place in the Sacristy or Baptistry of the church and not in the Sanctuary where the Communion table was situated. Archaeologists inspecting our ancient English churches always examine with interest the piscina in the Sanctuary where these eucharistic ablutions took place for many centuries. We have no pre-Norman piscinas in England. The earliest definite order in the Latin Church to

provide a piscina to receive the water that had been used for the washing of the hands and of the chalice is that of Pope Leo IV (847—855). The double piscina in our churches for the washing of the vessels and the hands have a special interest as they came into existence after the Fourth Lateran Council of 1216, and continued to be erected for about a century. With the revival of eucharistic ablutions by our Anglo-Catholic clergy it is a pity that the ancient piscinas have not been restored to their original use. There are few more unattractive ceremonies than the elaborate and pretentious 'washing-up' conducted on the Holy Table by our Anglo-Catholic revivalists.

We are glad to observe that in the new alternative rite of Holy Communion drawn up by the South India Church authorities and published in the *Church Times* of February 3, 1950, the service concludes thus :

'The Peace and the Blessing are recited and a hymn of praise or the *Nunc Dimittis* are sung while the ministers depart, taking with them the vessels used for the Communion and any of the elements which remain. These may be reverently consumed in the vestry.'

Our protest does not mean that we are necessarily opposed to the revival of all those ancient ceremonies of ablution which were discarded at the Reformation. For instance, there was, we feel, liturgical loss when at the Reformation the Holy Water stoups were shattered and their use forbidden. We recall visiting an ancient church in which the Holy Water stoup had been restored and was in use. Our companion, an English clergyman, who had been for years a Roman Catholic priest, said : 'For old sake's sake,' and dipped his finger in the Holy Water and signed the Cross on his forehead. In answer to the query, 'What is its precise significance?' he replied, 'It is primarily baptismal. According to the Nicene Creed we may only be baptized once, but this ceremony is intended to recall our baptism and the Crossing is a reminder of the Baptismal Cross.' This explanation suggested that perhaps this prohibited ablutionary ceremony might be worth reviving, especially in the face of the contemporary neglectful treatment of baptism. But much liturgical knowledge and sound judgment are demanded in the exercise of such a policy. One of the bad features of ecclesiasticism is, as St. Augustine recognized, the persistent tendency to overdo things liturgically. We cannot forget Duchesne's dialogue with an Anglo-Catholic priest as to the precise aim of his movement. At the conclusion of the explanation Duchesne commented : 'I see, you wish to introduce into your Church all that we wish to get rid of from ours.'

A LAYMAN LOOKS AT MODERNISM

By JOHN ROWLAND, B.Sc. Author of *Understanding the Atom* and *Atoms, Electrons and Rays*.

IN the days before the Second World War most people would probably have agreed that a rational outlook on theology was slowly growing in Great Britain. Many eminent churchmen of Modernist views were occupying high official positions in the Church of England, and books such as Dr. Barnes's *Scientific Theory and Religion* were being widely acclaimed both by reviewers and by the more serious section of the reading public as noteworthy contributions to thought. Anyone who, at that time, had suggested that a return to more strictly dogmatic ways of thought was either desirable or likely would, I think, have been laughed to scorn.

Yet what do we see to-day? We see Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr as probably the most admired figures in the world of theological thought; we see Emil Brunner coming more and more to the fore. In this country C. S. Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers, and others have created a considerable stir in the literary world by presenting in 'popular' form what is essentially a strictly dogmatic interpretation of the incidents recorded in the Bible; and all kinds of liberal religious thought, from the Modernist wing of the Church of England to the Unitarian Church, seem to be gradually disappearing if not from view at least from the limelight.

I hope that I do not sound too pessimistic, but I am trying to suggest a situation as it has come home to a layman of (I hope) rational views. I think that it is a great pity that what seems to me to be a sane attitude to the problems of religion appears to command the allegiance of fewer and fewer religious people as time goes on. Indeed, I do not think that it is too strong an expression to say that those who feel that rationality in religion is essential for any sort of intellectual progress are being steadily driven out of the Church of England (and out of some of the non-conformist bodies likewise) by the change in theological climate which is taking place.

There have been many of us in the past who have regarded ourselves as Rationalists, and that not in the narrowly Rationalist Press Association attitude to the term. If we have belonged to a Church it has been a Church which can command the mental allegiance of free reason, and not one in which reason has to be handed over to a body of priests or dogma-making laymen before Church membership is allowable. A recent book, *The Road to*

Damascus, gave brief autobiographies of several eminent people who had joined the Church of Rome in recent years. These people ranged from novelists like Evelyn Waugh and Sheila Kaye-Smith to journalists like Douglas Hyde (late news editor of *The Daily Worker*) and publicists like Clare Booth. I could not help wondering, when I read that book, whether any kind of comparable list could be produced by any of the other Churches. Admittedly, there is something about the pomp and ceremony of the Roman Catholic Church which attracts the poet and the artist; this has been obvious for generations. But the sad thing about *The Road to Damascus*, to my mind, was that there was nowhere any real indication of intellectual effort as the basis for a change in theological viewpoint.

Those of us who feel that to be intellectually convincing is one of the necessary bases for whatever theology we eventually accept are, however, rather left wondering in these days. Of course there are a number of places of worship of all denominations where a sane and rational attitude may be observed week by week; but the number of these is growing steadily less, and, in the opinion of many laymen, their influence is decreasing.

Never since the Bangorian Controversy in the early eighteenth century has it been possible for an English ecclesiastical body even to debate a motion giving it the right to expel an English Bishop who dares to claim the right to think for himself. That this motion was aimed at particular people within the Church of England should be obvious enough; but that does not affect its validity or its lack of wisdom. That any bench of bishops, or other body of dignitaries should have the right to decide to expel one of their own number for supposed heresy is one of the most dangerous of all claims; and probably the mere fact that such a line could be taken is one reason why the Church in this country seems to continue to lose ground.

I am, of course, aware that the Roman Catholic Church does not yield an inch to the Modernist attitude; but, as I suggested above, those who are converted to the Roman Catholic Church are those who do not value the life of reason as amongst the highest of man's attributes.

I know that what I have written up to this point will appear to be largely destructive in its implications. But I think that it is necessary to face destructive criticism before one turns to anything constructive. And this is where all those who feel that the case for Modernism is one that cannot be allowed to go by default have to embark on some not especially happy thinking. Anyone

who studies the literature of our day (especially the imaginative literature produced by poets and novelists) must be aware that there is a friendliness towards religious ideas such as has not existed for a long time. T. S. Eliot, of course, as poet and churchman, has long been outstanding; but others like W. H. Auden, Norman Nicholson, and Anne Ridler, who in the past would probably have been largely political in their outlook, are now unashamedly Christian. Norman Nicholson's striking novel *The Fire of the Lord*, even revolved around the year as it is encompassed by the festivals of the Church.

I think, too, that it may be taken for granted that when poets and novelists are taking up a position which is friendly towards such religious ideas those ideas are increasingly occupying the public mind. For poets and novelists, from their function and their mental make-up, are bound to be mirrors and interpreters of public taste. So it is almost certain that a greater appreciation of religion is gradually coming into the public conscience.

But is there a greater appreciation of the more rational side of religion? Do we find poets and novelists turning to the ideas and views of the Modernists? I think not. I think, even, that it is the more irrational views—those of the Roman Catholics and the extreme Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England—which command the admiration of poets and novelists. Here again, it may be, T. S. Eliot has given a lead which many lesser figures are content enough to follow.

It is in many ways unfortunate that the outlook of such imaginative writers as are coming round to a constructive view of Christianity are, for the most part, concerned largely with the more irrational and obscurantist side of religion. When Dorothy L. Sayers turned from detective fiction to theology, for example, it is to be much regretted that she did not use, in her theological writing, the ability to distinguish between the various degrees of circumstantial evidence which she had previously used in her writings of Lord Peter Wimsey.

But what, it may well be asked, can those who consider that the Modernist position is the only sensible one within the Church do in order to make more people appreciate their attitude? Indeed, most of those who take up that attitude must be aware of the fact that it is only if their views are given a reasonable amount of attention that the Church can continue to command the allegiance even of a minority of the people. If the purely dogmatic attitude of theology becomes that of a hundred per cent. of churchmen, the percentage of churchmen among the population,

In other words, will become progressively less and less as the months and the years go by. And the only way, in my view, that Modernism can attract any kind of mass following is the maintenance of Modernism as a creed which will appeal to all of intellectual integrity, and, at the same time, a resolute certainty not to compromise on any of the more exact aspects of theology.

It may, of course, be said that those who believe that there must be no compromise in such matters are, in effect, splitting the Church. A recent correspondence in *The Times* seemed to suggest that an opposite process was taking place, a process by which various strands of opinion on religion were coming closer.

But what should not, I feel, escape attention is that most of those who contributed to *The Times* letters on the present position of Catholicism in Europe appeared not to see that any advocacy of a Christian reunion under Vatican leadership must be a totalitarian union. And when that is said it is not to indicate any necessary criticism of the political attitude of the Pope. It is rather to suggest that the *theological* position taken up by Roman Catholicism is one which few believers in intellectual freedom can support.

In the hands of Modernists, then, rest many important things. That is the summing-up of the present position as it appears to the layman.

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

By J. C. HARDWICK

AFTER the First World War it was customary for our intellectuals to deride the nineteenth century. The fashion is now less popular, for we look back with a certain nostalgia upon a period so much more comfortable and settled than our own.

Professor Basil Willey in his latest volume¹ examines the beliefs and teaching of certain of the prophetic writers of that time, beginning with Coleridge and ending up with Matthew Arnold. The subject is of considerable interest if only because in learning about these people we can learn a good deal about ourselves.

Although the history of thought cannot be exhaustively interpreted in terms of the swinging pendulum, there is a good deal in the metaphor. The nineteenth century certainly reacted against its predecessor. The eighteenth century claimed to be an age of

¹ *Nineteenth Century Studies*. Chatto & Windus, 1949. 15s.

enlightenment. The strife-engendering fanaticisms of the previous century had been displaced by the scepticism of Hume, the polite infidelity of Gibbon, and a general contempt and hatred of 'enthusiasm' especially in its religious form.

Perhaps the hatred and contempt were overdone. It is one thing to take a fluid off the boil, but there is no need to reduce the temperature too far. Religious zeal may have taken some unpleasing forms, but to regard all religion as something primitive and outgrown proceeds from a defective psychology and from an altogether too superficial view of things. Over-simplification was their trouble.

Simplification, of course, is necessary, or we should never understand anything; it is an essential part of scientific method. Newton simplified the apparently erratic motions of the heavenly bodies. His mediaeval predecessors had done likewise, but their simplifications were less simple, and were therefore inferior scientifically. Darwin simplified the infinite variety of living organisms—and so on.

In the eighteenth century Jeremy Bentham, a figure wholly characteristic of his period, went so far as to simplify human motives by means of what may be termed an arithmetical calculus, weighing the *quanta* of pleasures and pains. Similar simplifications of religion were offered, writing it off as the pre-rational imaginings of primitive men. It was forgotten that in the spheres of ethics and religion the quantitative gives place to the qualitative; and as qualities are irreducible, simplifications may lead one astray.

Scientific simplifications, applied in their proper sphere, are useful, indeed indispensable. But a price has to be paid for them, and that price is the evacuation of the thing simplified—it is emptied of much that made it living and attractive. Science explains Nature and at the same time neutralizes it, drains off its life. The 104th Psalm was not written by a scientist but by a poet for whom Nature was alive, full of spirit, full of *Tao* as benighted Orientals would say.

A modern writer, D. H. Lawrence, in a passage quoted by Professor Willey, has put this point with some emphasis:

'The universe is dead for us, and how is it to become alive again? "Knowledge" has killed the sun, making it a ball of gas with spots; "Knowledge" has killed the moon—it is a dead little earth fretted with extinct craters as with smallpox.'

There are those who find the scientific view of Nature mentally and imaginatively stimulating; for the creative imagination does enter into the inspired discovery of some comprehensive formula

like that of Newton or of Darwin. The process of proving the theory may be laborious, involving the work of years, but the inspiration would seem to come in a moment.² Also, the power of controlling Nature which science gives acts as a tonic making man feel like a conqueror.

But there are others, like D. H. Lawrence, who find these scientific theories and everything connected with them profoundly depressing. They seem to drain Nature of life. And this kind of reaction against the aridity of science was displaying itself with some strength at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

'There was at this time a new spirit afloat, a sense that there were spiritual needs and unseen realities, which had been unrecognized, in the religious, ethical, political and aesthetic teachings of the immediate past.'

The leader of the reaction in England was Coleridge, who, repelled by the negations of a philosopher such as Hume, whose disciple he had originally been, drew a distinction, derived from Kant, between the 'reason' and the 'understanding.' He gave meanings of his own to these elements in human mentality. All the negative deliverances of the preceding 'age of reason' were not denied but, as it were, short-circuited by attributing them to the 'understanding'—the faculty by which we generalize and arrange the phenomena of perception. To 'reason' Coleridge gave a new meaning; this was '*the organ of the supersensuous*,' a kind of insight giving a deeper knowledge than was possible through the 'understanding.'

It is indeed true that, as has been said, Coleridge was a poet and a preacher rather than a philosopher; and it is a little confusing to avoid the appearance of 'a flight from reason' by giving an entirely new meaning to the term 'reason'; but in spite of this it remains true that Coleridge had got hold of a sound idea, namely, that the analytical faculty is not the sole instrument for acquiring genuine knowledge. The Pauline principle that 'spiritual things are spiritually discerned' is what the Coleridgean view really amounts to. It does seem possible to draw a valid distinction between knowing things 'from outside' as scientific analysis presents them, and knowing things 'from inside' as the mystic or poet sees them. In the one case we stand apart from things; in the other we get, so to speak, 'inside' them.

At any rate, even though consecutive thought may not have been (as Höffding remarks) Coleridge's *forte*, his influence upon English ways of thinking was for a generation very considerable.

² As in the case of Alfred Russell Wallace, whose theory of the origin of species came to him in a bout of fever in the East Indies.

The fact was that he happened to be the mouthpiece of ideas which were coming to the surface and were bound to do so. Had he not emerged with his message, that message would have come through somehow.

Coleridge has been called a religious Epicurean, but at least he did not consider religion, Professor Willey points out, *in vacuo*, as a disembodied spirit. Such religion usually evaporates under the burden and heat of the day. In his view there should be a National Church to supply the preconditions of the good life. He regarded such a Church in the light of a kind of 'Third Estate' existing for spiritual and cultural ends. Though believing in the necessity for a Church, Coleridge was, however, no friend to an ecclesiastical theology, congealed into outward forms and formulae; but he did not work the idea out in any practical shape.

This was to be the task of a more disciplined character, one who was master both of his conduct in life and of his train of thought, namely, Thomas Arnold. Lytton Strachey, voicing the disillusion of the nineteen-twenties, and falling in with the then current fashion of denigrating our Public Schools, sought to make fun of Arnold—a man who had ideals of the kind that, given courage, brains and determination, can be realized.

Arnold himself admitted that he was indebted to the teaching of Coleridge, and there can be no doubt that the influence was deep, and the ideals of the poet and preacher became for him, as they became for F. Denison Maurice—though in a different way—a programme for action. In his chapter on Thomas Arnold, Professor Willey writes :

'The leading principle of his whole life's effort was to realize the idea of a Christian Society, in microcosm at Rugby, and at large in the nation. . . . For him the worst apostasy, the source of all woes, was the separation of things secular from things spiritual: this meant, on the one hand, the handing over of all temporal concerns to the devil, and, on the other, the retreat of religion into priestly inutilities.'

Arnold was equally opposed to the view of the State as existing only for physical ends, and to the priestly view of the Church as a separate society governed by a divinely appointed hierarchy. In his view it was the perversion of the Church into a sacerdotal caste which, above anything else, hindered the coming of the Kingdom. To make the Church of England truly national Arnold would have comprehended the Dissenters. 'Why not unite in one Church different opinions and different rites and ceremonies?' he asked. He would have used the parish churches for all the varying services of the united sects.

Arnold's ideal of the Christian school was realized at Rugby,

and in greater or lesser measure in all the great schools which have modelled themselves upon that exemplar. And never have those schools been more popular, or the education given in them more sought after, than to-day, as a last barrier against the standardization of our education by the State.

But though Arnold's ideals in education may be said in a large measure to have been fulfilled, his ideals for the Church were neutralized by another Movement which, as it magnified their office and underwrote their spiritual vested interests, made a strong appeal to the great body of the clergy. And not the least interesting of Professor Willey's chapters is that on Newman. These two men, Arnold and Newman, did then, and still do, symbolize two conflicting trends in cultural and religious thought in England :

‘ Arnold, ethical and liberal, aiming at the promotion of goodness by Christian gentlemen ; Newman, mystical and dogmatic, aiming at the production of saints by an infallible Church.’

Liberalism, the fruit of the Renaissance, was for Newman the enemy, in its very nature destructive of faith in the unseen, and whose inevitable end was atheism ; he dreaded and resisted it all his life. Arnold, on the other hand, sought to baptize Liberalism into Christ, and believed it could be done. He held that the specific intellectual challenges of the time could be met by the fearless and instructed Christian man. To Newman, on the other hand, these new challenges and attacks on the faith were but the reincarnations and vain repetitions of old heresies, over which the Church had triumphed long ago. Such challenges were bound to arise, coming as they did from that perverse spirit in fallen man which is an enemy of the truth. Against these the Faith must stand firm as a great rock against which the recurrent waves of Liberal heresy would dash themselves into ineffectual foam.

‘ With anxious eyes and a beating heart ’ Newman had wound his dangerous way through the mazes of Arianism, Sabellianism and the rest, and how should their modern incarnations, the heresies of the nineteenth century, alarm or even interest him ? His view of history, too, was apocalyptic, not progressive. Where his contemporaries saw a progress ‘ along the ringing grooves of change,’ he saw simply a light amid the encircling gloom. Gloom is indeed the word, for to Newman the darker side of life seemed the more prominent :

‘ The disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary, hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described by the Apostle’s words, *having no hope and without God in the world* — all this

is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind a sense of profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.'

Far different from Coleridge (to whom, however, he owed much) from Arnold and from Newman, was the austere prophet of the Northern Kingdom whose voice reverberated 'like ten thousand trumpets' in the ears of his hearers, Thomas Carlyle. J. A. Froude declared that Carlyle saved him from Positivism, from Romanism, from Atheism, and taught him to believe in a living God even though the creeds were outworn. The seer of Ecclefechan delivered the captives out of captivity, offering them a spiritual view of life in place of the materialism which seemed to be spreading like a tropical creeper over everything. Carlyle's was one of those religious temperaments which cannot find rest for the sole of their foot on any churchly perch. Though he had a lively and speaking message for his day, he was in a sense one born out of due time.

'Carlyle,' says Professor Willey, 'belonged to the company of the escaped Puritans. Rejecting Church, creed and sacrament—all that he described as "Hebrew Old-Clothes"—he yet retained the deep intuitions of his Calvinistic peasant-childhood, and it was from the unquestioned certainties of Puritanism that he derived both his satiric animus and his prophetic energy.'

Though the affinities between Carlyle and Coleridge are striking, since both in their different ways denounced the *damnosa hereditas* of the previous century's narrow rationalism, with its fruits of atheism, materialism and utilitarian ethics, yet Carlyle's opinion of Samuel Taylor Coleridge was neither flattering nor politely expressed. 'A mass of richest spices putrefied into a dunghill,' was the way he put it. The trouble with poor Coleridge, according to this mordant critic, was that he sought to reinstate the old theology and the associated clerical dream-world with their enervating odour of decay, pleasing to some, though not to Thomas Carlyle. Had there been no Coleridge, he said, there would have been no Puseyites, and perhaps he was right there. The Past, he felt, was the past; the Present was something different; just the opposite to what Newman held, who reading of the past saw his own face in that mirror. The Church, thought Carlyle, must with melancholy reverence be given sepulture; but according to Newman it was the world, the progressive world of the secular idealists, that should sink into the pit. Not that Carlyle was one of our believers in the roseate hues of a utopian dawn, for he classed Benthamism and the Rights of Man among the deluding simulacra springing from the Father of Lies.

To pass from the trumpet blasts of Carlyle sounding before

the shaking walls of Jericho, it is a relief, perhaps, to hear the gentler music of another apostle of culture, but of a different breed, namely, Matthew Arnold. Less brilliantly gifted or at least less forceful than some of his predecessors, he was, says Professor Willey, more understanding and had more detachment and flexibility than they. He was 'serious without solemnity and earnest without portentousness.' In him we encounter 'a new phenomenon, the "literary" intelligence playing freely upon the great concerns of human life.' In short, he stands a good deal nearer to us than, say, Thomas Carlyle, who is inclined to deafen us.

Matthew Arnold is sometimes thought of as one surrendering to the temptations of the backward glance, regretting the days

' . . . when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames :
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife.'

But if some of his verse, being that of one who moved

' . . . between two worlds, one dead
The other powerless to be born,'

was by way of being an elegy for the departed, his prose writings did strive to assist that new world to come to birth. Though he was indeed an apostle of culture and poetry, yet, says Professor Willey, religion was to him the highest form both of culture and of poetry. The highest art, he declared, is that 'which by its height, depth and gravity possesses religiousness.' On its highest level poetry passes into religion, and religion must pass into poetry if it is to penetrate and transform 'that poor, inattentive and immoral creature, man.'

Though himself an accomplished scholar who could write on translating Homer, culture for Matthew Arnold was not a smattering of two dead languages, however beautiful, but a 'study of perfection,' and a 'getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best that has been thought and said in the world, and through this knowledge, turning a fresh stream of thought upon our stock notions and habits.' Thus knowledge of and thought about the past is mere pedantry unless it stimulates creative thought about the present.

The whole drift of Matthew Arnold's religious writings was in the liberal, and the English liberal, tradition. Professor Willey says that his attitude can best be summed up in his own words from the Preface to *God and the Bible* (1875):

'At the present moment two things about the Christian religion must

surely be clear to anybody with eyes in his head. One is, that men cannot do without it; the other, that they cannot do with it as it is.'

In these writings, such as *Literature and Dogma*, the 'conservative-reforming' spirit of nineteenth-century England finds its most persuasive expression. Arnold is akin to the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century, and to him religion was always the thing that mattered most, and the important need was to find a satisfactory basis for it and to make it invulnerable to 'scientific' criticism. It was essential that religion should be perpetuated, but in his view this could only be through its being transformed far more radically than even his father would have allowed, for he knew how far the undercutting of the Christian foundations had now gone. Matthew Arnold, says Professor Willey, has indeed truly been called the founder of English Modernism. Educationist, moralist, apostle of culture, he desired to make possible the permanent retention of the Bible as the basis of our civilization.

So much, then, for Yesterday; but what of To-day? Perhaps the signs of the times are not too favourable, for there is no denying that the atmosphere has changed, and not altogether for the better. The first half of the twentieth century has seen happenings which would have appalled, or at least startled, the men whose ideals we have examined, though it may be that what has happened in men's minds has been of more importance than any outward events.

The primary object of the men whose views have been dealt with above was to find a place, in a society increasingly given over to science, for poetry, religion and human culture generally. Science is by no means necessarily hostile to such things, certainly less so than are some forms of crude superstition; but the pre-occupation of science with the unit rather than with the individual, and with quantity rather than quality, may result in a certain indifference to that side of life which finds expression in poetry, religion and the arts. For it is certainly the case that individual quality, both of perception and expression, takes a predominant place here.

To-day certain threats to individuality and personality have arisen which Coleridge and Carlyle hardly foresaw. First comes the New Psychology with its subjection of the conscious *ego* to subconscious movements.

'The psychologist will tell us that no man can really act as an individual, that the Macbeths and Lears of our older drama only *seem* to

make conscious choice of their fates, which are, in fact, the result of subconscious motives over which they have no control.'³

The Victorian poet might claim to be 'captain of his soul,' but in the light of Freud he would be a bold man who would do so to-day. The captain may believe he is steering the vessel, but tides and currents have it all their own way.

But not only is the idea of a self-directing, rational personality compromised, but modern man feels himself to be the helpless victim of outer, as well as inner, forces which he cannot control. The modern citizen is at the mercy of ineluctable economic forces and his ways are controlled by an ubiquitous State machine. At any moment a World War may loose itself upon him, and the few freedoms he has left will vanish overnight. Impersonal forces seem too much for him.

It would almost seem, too, that the day of great personalities is past. The modern 'superman,' whether dictator or film-star, is nothing but an embodiment of the mediocre and often vulgar ideals of the masses, whose minds and tastes have perhaps been deliberately debauched by those in whose interest it is to keep them in subjection.

Among our proletariat, modern commercialized sport and the gigantic associated vested interest of highly organized gambling — now an 'industry' of high priority — is about the most effective 'opium of the people' that could be imagined. It is true that the mechanical sterility of modern sport calls for gambling to give it an interest, and the leaden monotony of modern industrial and business life calls for some artificial excitement as compensation. But whatever the psychological or social causes of this sub-rational activity, the disappearance of moral and spiritual ideals among our masses cannot be dissociated from it. And a sinister feature of the situation is that those whose object is the enslavement of our populace regard with equanimity the destruction in them of all the deeper loyalties.

In religion the results of this submergence of the individual may be seen in the revival of an authoritarian Catholicism, whether Roman or Anglican — a symptom that the individual has lost faith in himself and his own judgment; he feels he cannot cope with his own personal problems. Life, complicated and overshadowed by impersonal forces, is just too much for him.

'The Church is an institution beyond personality, and in it the individual can forgo the individuality of his own beliefs for the certainty of

³ D. S. Bland, *The Tragic Hero in Modern Literature* 'The Cambridge Journal, January, 1950.

authority. And the same is pre-eminently true, of course, of the philosophy of Marxism, which both ethically and politically denies the validity of the self.' ⁴

That a close parallelism exists between Catholicism and Marxism has often been pointed out. Catholicism indeed claims to place a supreme value upon the individual, but subjects him nevertheless to an ecclesiastical community, *i.e.* the Church, as Marxism subjects him to a secularist community, *i.e.* the State. Neither Marxism nor Catholicism believes in private judgment or in freedom of thought. It is true that these two creeds are implacably hostile to one another, but this perhaps is due to the fact that they resemble one another and are rivals for the allegiance of mankind.

Whether the present vogue of authoritarian theory will continue and for how long remains to be seen. Such authoritarianism always seems to be the result of a period's failure to solve its problems. The knot cannot be untied, so it is cut.

That the writers examined above made sincere efforts to solve the problems of their day is obvious enough; nor did they altogether fail. Had they done so, our position to-day would be far worse than it now is. Coleridge, Carlyle, Matthew Arnold enabled a large number of educated Englishmen to resist the seductions of a completely secularist view of life.

Their task has to be tackled afresh if the second half of the twentieth century is not to be a period of cultural decay and religious stagnation, while science and technology march ahead. And a world in which science flourishes and human values disappear or are perverted is quite possible. The technologist can be a barbarian, and may serve masters who are sevenfold more the children of hell.

'The world,' wrote Dr. Edwyn Bevan, 'might enter upon a period of spiritual petrefaction, a terrible order which for the higher activities of the human spirit would be death. . . .'

'While philosophy and poetry would languish, scientific research might go on with continuous fresh discoveries. Greek science did not find the Ptolemaic realm an uncongenial environment, and I think, generally speaking, natural science may flourish under a despotism. It is to the interest of a ruling group to encourage what may increase the means of power.' ⁵

So those who carry on the work of those nineteenth-century prophets have a tough task ahead of them if the human spirit is not to be engulfed, as it has been more than once, by a flood of darkness.

⁴ Bland, *loc. cit.*

⁵ In a letter to A. J. Toynbee, in the latter's *Study of History*, Vol. V, p. 9.

THE IMMATURITY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING DEMOCRACY

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THE intellectual misses much if he does not get beyond sick and superior dismay when he contemplates the ways in which men and women behave under the stimulus of party politics. Yet dismay is natural enough to anyone disciplined in political studies. Democracy is the attempt of men 'coined small' to govern themselves, and the test of its success is that, under its large decisions, small affairs should go well. But the agitations of little people over their little matters seem to the 'intellectual' so unequal to producing the large wisdom for great affairs. From this superior height, he fails to see what the party system, evolving by leaps to meet successive demands of history, has done in answer to the problems of infant democracy. But there is a *prima facie* case now for his scorn, and a much deeper case for the contention that the party system is now due for its next stage of evolution.

What strikes the 'intellectual' as particularly deplorable in the political scene is that it rejects himself. Here in Australia a higher education has become nearly a disqualification for party politics. Only the very rare thinker who can please the crowd has any survival value. It is just the man who has a working knowledge of economics, social psychology, history and/or an ethical or religious understanding of society that is directly excluded from participating in the main decisions. And he is shut out by reason of his detachment from sectional interests, his inability to share in the surges of popular feeling, his capacity to take views not limited within the visible present, his incapacity to simplify solutions into slogans — his refusal, in short, to identify himself with any group seeking as leaders personalities that merely symbolize its mass fears, hopes, prejudices and desires. If he serves politics, it must be as a technical expert — 'one of the back-room boys' — where he may indeed have real power by virtue of knowing more of the matter in hand than those whose politics it is his duty loyally to complement. It would seem that party politics forbid all share in ruling to Plato's ideal ruler — the man who combines a sound philosophy of life with personal disinterestedness and a thorough knowledge of the facts. But Plato's ideal ruler can become, and fortunately often does become, the ideal civil servant.

Now the main decisions and directions of a democracy are taken out of the midst of a fairly confused noise, which is not the

high-minded debate and dignified discussion that the founders and idealizers of democracy contemplated, but a noise made up of self-interests and group interests made vocal, a noise for which sub-rational emotions are organised, a sound of complex questions being sliced into simple contradictions, and opposing moral indignations, and the hurling of facts edited to serve as missiles. All this is distressing to the man who would create a community of interests and people by goodwill working through knowledge and reason in committee.

PARTY POLITICS IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

But for all that, this discordant shouting is the noise made by a process which has brought democracy through the perils of infancy and adolescence in those few countries in which it has survived. Normally, the work done inside the various workshops of English-speaking democracy is not so bad as the noise would suggest. Our contention in this article is, first, that the forces of tension and division have been getting more intense and divisive since the war, at the expense of the forces that hold a democracy together, which have been growing relatively weaker. The noise and dust of the clash between two conceptions of society has blinded and deafened men to the aim of society itself, which is the living of the good life together, and to the aim of democracy, which is the living of the good life together while enlisting all the members of the community in making that good life better.

And, second, we contend that the time has come when those engaged in industrial and political conflict, who believe that democracy can work better than other methods in resolving these discords, should say together and loudly the creed that unites them, and that they should realize that the hour has come for the next stage in political maturity. Party politics existed before democracy. The underlying agreements that make democracy came later. These always precarious agreements disarmed party politics and made them methods of democratic government. For democracy has not developed gradually, but in a series of sudden jerks to meet crises. There is now due a development in party politics—perhaps a fairly sharp and sudden one—whereby minds who experience life differently can think creatively together.

DEMOCRACY AND THE PRESSURE GROUP

To-day we should be making our own world safer for democracy by making conscious preparation for democracy's next step towards maturity. For the strains of multi-lateral group warfare

are taking over from bi-lateral class warfare and overlapping them, and these strains thrust against the very centre of democratic authority. In a society which lives its life and does its work by the interlocking of very many skills, each group, organized to monopolize some necessary skill, can do passive violence to the whole community, and hold it to ransom by withdrawing its skill in order to press its demands for a greater share of goods and services. The responsibility for keeping things going, for the general principles of distributing goods and services, and for directing economic energies, rests, both in Britain and Australia, mainly on the State, and it is the authority of the State that is challenged by the group. The ordinary citizen must be prepared to endure a good deal of hardness in support of the authority of the State if democracy is to survive this its present crisis. If it is to stand the new strains, the party system, as the means whereby democracy canalizes its decisions, must undergo certain modifications that can only be achieved by political partisans entering into a new phase of maturity in thought, feeling and judgment. The same person must learn how to combine two loyalties — one to his social and economic group, the other to the authority of democracy itself.

THE BASIC AGREEMENTS OF DEMOCRACY

We must first make clear to ourselves the underlying agreements which must 'contain' the conflicts of party warfare if democracy is to survive. These principles form the Athanasian Creed of democracy with the damnatory clause firmly attached to each of them separately and all of them together. Each is a right of the individual, a mutual responsibility of individual and community, and a warning of perpetual danger. Here it must be sufficient merely to mention the constitutional principles of democracy: respect for the individual and his personal liberty as conditioned by equal consideration for all individuals; the right of the individual to find his own level without restriction of caste or party; universal suffrage; government by majority vote; the right to local self-government; respect for the known and written law preventing the arbitrary rule of clique, party or person.

But behind these clauses and giving life to them operates a spirit hard to define. It is the sense of an underlying unity joining men in nature and well-being. It is the assumption that each party attaining power will rule, according to its own principles, in the interests of the community as a whole, and with due regard to what is just to each individual. It is the assumption that the majority will rule with sympathetic consideration for the minority or

minorities so far as its conceptions of justice permit. Pressed to its final definition, democracy is the faith that beneath all diversities men are essentially brothers meant to live together under the control and inspiration of values that are laws of well-being—that is, in religious language, the faith that men are brethren in God. The danger is constant that men will so mismanage democracy as to lose the faith that keeps democracy alive. When a democracy thus loses its soul, its body soon disintegrates.

Democracy is always on trial for its life. Does the way of party politics lead towards democracy's more abundant life, or death? History replies, I think, that it is the expression of political human nature at its present level; that in its present stage of mental and spiritual development it cannot answer the problems now arising for nations and societies; but can develop, out of its present shortcomings, increased competence for making more satisfactory decisions in the interests of the good life together.

THE USE OF PARTY POLITICS — POLARITY AND FREEDOM

Let us examine the survival values of party government. It does gather in the 'little man.' The party system has made democracy possible by giving the 'little man' the feeling—considerably justified—that he is the last word deciding the fate of nations and determining the direction of movements into the future. This power to choose direction is what he wants. Details worry him because they are beyond him, but the simplicity of fundamental choice is within his range. Not by intellectual argument, but by intuition beyond his power to define, he decides between parties, according to the kind of improvements in his lot that he wants to make in the kind of world which he prefers.

To-day, for example, the conflict in democracy is between the claims of Freedom and Solicitude. The 'little man' will decide between the benefits of being looked after more closely by the State, and the advantages of more liberty of action for individuals allowing the strong more scope for becoming stronger, especially to produce more. He does not want to choose either Freedom or Solicitude to the exclusion of the other. It is this polarity, this chance to 'swing' between opposites, which party politics offer, that gives the sense of freedom to those who value it. If and when he has had enough of one thing, and gone far enough in one direction, he feels that he can change direction. So he comes out of the fatigue or boredom, or the sense of frustration or disillusionment, which a prolonged entertainment of one kind of political hope usually brings.

Over a certain span of political time dominated by one large political problem there is usually room only for one dominant ideal at a time. It is thrown forward as an answer to the circumstances of the moment, and fortunate is the party which first seizes on it. But the failure of this ideal in the hands of ordinary people to fulfil all the expectations that it first aroused leaves many of its supporters tired of it. They turn to its complementary or opposite ideal — from Solicitude to Freedom, say — and this other Idea makes its turn of responsibility for shaping practical affairs. The dream which the True Believers in any one Idea always hold — the dream that this Idea, Socialism or Individualism, for example, will one day establish complete unchallengeable and permanent ascendancy — works in the dreamer as the temptation to destroy Democracy in the name of Political Righteousness. A great and essential Idea, having endured long sorrows, will indeed create enduring achievements, lasting laws, institutions, moral values and conventions, habits of thought, but it will not remain 'The Whole Show.' The religious conviction which sobers victory and comforts defeat is expressed by A. N. Whitehead in the words :

'We must conceive the Divine *Eros* as the active entertainment of all ideals, with the urge to their finite realization, each in its due season.'

FACTORS WORKING FOR SANITY

Paradoxically, the party system, in English-speaking countries, has worked towards a balanced political sanity. Concerning each concrete measure brought forward, everything relevant that counts for and against it gets said loudly, intelligibly, publicly and repeatedly. It is true, though, that attempts to listen to all voices and make a synthesis and balance of argument are confined to small and apparently unimportant circles above the firing line. Intellectual justice lives only within a rarefied atmosphere. But opposing political philosophies that are bearing on the situation in hand do get their turns. The pain, threat or promise of the moment calls on and chooses one of them for its emphasis. The immediate post-war period called for security and solicitude, for example. The expansionist period of the nineteenth century called on individualism to raise the general standard of living.

A balance of thought and conduct is not attained, and this imperfection of balances is the need for change. 'Things' no doubt would be better managed if the Government of the day acted out of a political philosophy, and a set of values, more comprehensive and broader than the party platform. Truth is complex, so is welfare; and the nineteenth century would have been happier with

more regard for Security and Solicitude, as perhaps the post-war period would have done its business better if the place of Freedom and Enterprise within planning had been more clearly defined and generally recognized in the minds of those vowed to security and solicitude. But the dominance of one political philosophy, whose believers talk more simply than they act, a philosophy simple enough to permit a flow of emotion, and inconsistent enough in act to meet complex situations — that is the price we pay for the participation of the 'little man' in democratic government. Parties are saved by their inconsistencies.

Opposing political parties must orchestrate their philosophies to the exigencies of the band-wagon, if those political philosophies are to march.

But the real and ever-present danger of over-simplicity is countered in three ways. First, the political group in power must get there by persuading the support of a large number of pendulum voters. Among these the temper of detachment is strong. Reasonableness and idealism are real vote-swinging influences, as are the effects of changing circumstances or personal fortunes. And many electors have their interests and emotions engaged in the causes represented by both the conflicting political parties. Most of the new managerial class, for example, depend for their safety and hope of achievement on the success of private enterprise, but they are also employees, and need such securities as the State can be called on to provide.

Second, in these days, the terms on which society's work is done are determined by considerations which arise from the interlocking of skills rather than by class dominance. The party in power must, therefore, manage a complex situation having regard to the community as a going concern, and the working consents of all the elements of which it is composed. It is, in fact, not possible, especially in this post-war era and in Anglo-Saxon countries, to convey real advantage to one section of the community by doing things that depress the producing power or incentive to work of any other section, to any marked degree. Extreme measures always have a boomerang effect. The thoughts of party politicians have to be more complex than their words.

Third, large-scale political policies translate themselves into long-term economic commitments and plans. Such policies are subject to the constraints of continuity. They must join on to what has been. Those who make these plans must imagine them fitting into a future community, a community in the practical foreseeable

future, that thinking morally will do justice to every kind of person producing what the community wants and, thinking in economic limits, give him at least what keeps him producing at his best. Justice in practice will amount to a running working adjustment between what each economic group thinks just for itself, and what the community, through its machinery, decrees is just. So the constraint of facts, past, present and to come, works against extremism.

Extremism is possible only by breaking things. In its talk, however, it can skip this phase of breaking things, and pass on to the painting of the Utopian picture. Hence when extremism comes to destructive action it loses the support of many of those whose hearts were kindled by its pictures of the world beyond the smash. Private heads rather than mass emotions are still polled under the democratic system that puts an elector alone in a polling booth to make a secret, silent, decision by himself.

It is easy to underrate the competence of the electorate when one judges by the standards of sophistication. Competence, however, is not to be measured by sophistication. Le Bon and the early social psychologists drew horrific pictures of destructive emotional mass action. Ortega Y Gasset, in his *Revolt of the Masses*, takes a 'dim view' of the behaviour of ordinary people when they get into crowds. It is, of course, true that there is destructive danger in the physical collection of a number of people excited by anger, especially when that anger takes the form of self-pity and a sense of grievance that isolates them from the community and cuts the current of responsibility. A hungry mob is apt to destroy bakeries. In the conduct of their public disagreements democratic peoples should be aware of an element dangerous to the social achievements they agree to value—a danger that lurks in their capacity for passion.

SANITY AND SWING

But that destructive mass hysteria is not the normal mood of English party politics. To-day the elector is asked to make a choice not so much between the claims of accumulated wealth and of empty proletarian hands, as between claims of rival industrial systems for co-ordinating various kinds of skill and energy—how much or how little control over personal initiatives. Both the contending systems are equations of enterprise and control, one having more respect for saving and free enterprise than the other, which leans more towards equality and security. The choice is not one that in the last resort can be determined solely by argument or evidence. It is finally a question of preference, influenced

by mental pictures of changes in one's own lot, and ethical convictions concerning what is due to human dignity and what is required for the life considered good. But the choice between one democratic party and another on any special occasion is the 'feel' of the actual social situation of the moment, as it surrounds the fate of the man who is being asked to choose between two political ways of changing his environment. This 'feel of the moment' alters with the course of events, and the alteration carries with it an increasing proportion of the people who have interests on both sides of the traditional line between capital and labour. The swinging motion working in the minds of so many electors who have to choose parties for occasions acts, over a period, as a sub-conscious sanity.

DISCIPLINE OF HOPE

Each political party is subject to the discipline of hope—hope that is bound up with persuasion. This hope is an internal discipline. Not only is it an antidote to the toxic poisons of despair which drive men reckless. The political party in power hopes to win a renewal of confidence in the predominant mood of most voters, and therefore must make promises that appear sober, of a realisable instalment of current aspirations, and must abstain from policies of dislocation that spread widely uncertainty, fear and confusion. The political party out of office hopes to take advantage of the mistakes and miscalculations of its opponents that produce these feelings of fear and uncertainty. It offers corrective policies, and it puts forward instalments of those ideals that its opponents' beliefs and policies have crowded out. The natural combative instincts of the 'little man' are thus turned to useful account. It has been said that the contention between Liberals and Conservatives during the nineteenth century in Britain was a competition in the timing of attempts 'to get on the band-wagon' rather than a conflict of principle. The Conservatives under Disraeli passed most of the Radical legislation.

The emotions of party politics gather round symbolic personalities and symbolic measures. The sense of direction, rather than the concrete proposal, stirs the rank and file. The convinced and steady adherents put their hopes in one or more leaders rather than in any special thing that they intend to do, though, of course, leaders and programmes cannot be separated in the mind. On the whole this personalism works to purify emotions. Democratic leaders must have personalities capable of standing up, in every word and act, to fierce publicity, and to criticism—most of

claiming to be ethical. The grosser forms of corruption and injustice become almost impossible. In Great Britain and Australia the democratic machinery, while allowing the 'little man' to choose persons and broad policies, keeps him at a safe distance from the controls that regulate detail. Given the choice of direction, the 'little man' does not want to act; given dramatized notions, he does not itch to interfere in matters which he does not understand. In the United States, on the other hand, the fact that the House of Representatives and one-third of the Senate are elected every two years, together with the tradition that Congressmen should represent local interests, keep political decisions under the direct control of the popular emotions of the moment.

THE DEFENCE SUMS UP

To sum up for the defence :

On the whole, the two-party system, as we see it in English-speaking democracies, enlists the interest and participation of the 'little man' and ensures his acceptance of political decisions; gives him a real influence in the choice of leaders and directions of policy; provides for the dramatizing and discussion of political issues so as to bring them within his mental range; trains political groups for membership of society by the use or expectation of political power; gives alternations of power to social and political tendencies that are opposing but complementary; and exacts certain standards of efficiency and honesty. But the system contains weaknesses and dangers, some of which are rooted in man's 'original sin,' which politically includes group selfishness, pride, fear, laziness and lack of faith. In a state of immaturity 'original sin' has its way more unchecked and unredeemed than in a stage of political maturity. 'The troubles of our hot and angry dust' will always be there. No clear line can be drawn. But remedies both for sin and immaturity are now made urgent by the rise of the pressure group.

(To be concluded in our June issue.)

A REVIEW OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE PROBLEM OF INTER-COMMUNION*

By the REV. E. C. DEWICK, M.A., B.D.

I. SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

(a) Anyone who sets out to 'review the attitudes' of other people may well be asked: 'What of your own attitude? Will not this give a bias to your estimate of others?' The challenge is a legitimate one; for we all have our prejudices, likes and dislikes, and it is impossible (perhaps even undesirable) to suppress these entirely. So in the present review, while an honest effort will be made to present other points of view with fairness, it is not likely that the attitude of the writer will be completely concealed from the reader.

(b) A division of attitudes into 'classes,' useful though it is, savours somewhat of artificiality; for in practice one attitude 'shades off' into another without any sharp line of division between them.

(c) There are some persons to whose minds Inter-Communion presents no 'problem.' On the one hand are those who are sure that they have a monopoly of truth, which everyone else must accept,¹ and on the other hand, those who can see no reason why we should not at once have Inter-Communion all round. But this survey is addressed to those who believe that our present differences ought neither to be dismissed as unimportant, nor abandoned as for ever irreconcilable. Rather they constitute a call to mutual conference and prayer on the part of all those who are prepared to learn from each other, and from God.

II. 'ABSOLUTIST' AND 'RELATIVIST' ATTITUDES

One of the most penetrating divisions of opinion with regard to Inter-Communion can be traced back to the distinction between two types of mind, which we may call 'Absolutist' and 'Relativist.' By 'Absolutist' we mean those who ascribe to certain outward forms (whether of institutions, rites, or words) an 'absolute,' Divine authority, which separates them sharply from all 'merely human' things² and gives them a character that is for ever final

* The substance of an address given at the Conference of Friends of Reunion, at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, January 5, 1950.

¹ For example, the early Tractarians maintained that 'the Church of England teaches the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth' (Tract 36). In that case, the Problem of Reunion and Inter-Communion can be easily solved, by Romanists and Dissenters alike joining this one and only perfect Church.

² 'There is a line to be drawn between the Divine and the human elements in the Church.' (Fr. Hebert, in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 499.)

and binding upon the Church. The 'Relativist,' on the other hand, declines to draw any such sharp dividing-line, believing that God's revelation is always apprehended by mankind 'through a glass, darkly,' and that consequently in all human attempts to express God's words and deeds, there must remain an element of relative imperfection. This division to some extent 'cuts across' the traditional one between 'Catholic' and 'Protestant,' and in many ways it is more fundamental.

2. *'Absolutist' Attitudes.* Of these there are many types.

1. The claim that one particular form of ministry has been directly appointed by God for the Church, and is therefore unchangeable for all time.

In the past, this claim has been made for many different forms of ministry. For instance, after the Reformation, the insistence by the Church of England upon 'the Divine Right of Episcopacy' was countered by the claim of the Puritans that their form of ministry alone was 'Scriptural.' In the early nineteenth century the Tractarians maintained that the threefold ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons was instituted in precisely that form by the Apostles, and is absolutely essential for the Church.³ The Church of Rome has consistently proclaimed that the authority of the Pope is uniquely Divine.

To-day, this exclusive claim is rarely made by Free Churchmen; and among Anglicans it is now generally put forward (as we shall shortly see) in a somewhat modified form. In the Roman Catholic Church, it is still the official dogma, though some individual members of that Church interpret it in a very 'liberal' way.⁴

³ See *Tracts for the Times* (1833-); esp. Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 36; also the Rev. S. H. Cassan's *Sermons* (1829), p. 40.

⁴ For example, Fr. Congar, in his *Divided Christendom* (Engl. trans., 1939, issued with the *Nihil Obstat* of the Holy See), says:

'Our separated brethren, and the "good heathen," are in some way members of the Catholic Church. This is a conclusion we cannot evade.' (p. 223.)

The non-Roman reader may find it hard to reconcile this with the official pronouncement of Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, issued in 1928:

'There is but one way to unity: return to the one true Church of Christ, visible to all, which remains exactly as He instituted it; never contaminated, nor in the future shall it be. In this One Church, no man can be or remain who does not accept and obey the authority and supremacy of Peter and his successors.' (Bishop Bell's *Documents on Christian Unity*, II, p. 49.)

In this there is nothing new; for it does but reaffirm the substance of Pope Boniface VIII's Bull, *Unam Sanctam*, A.D. 1294.

2. The claim that the unique Apostolic authority of the Ministry is transmitted only through the Episcopate.

This theory, recently set forth as the true Anglican position by a group of eminent theologians,⁵ calls for fuller consideration. Historically, it is a development of the older Tractarian view,⁶ but it differs from this in several respects.⁷ Its main points are :

- (a) That the Christian Ministry was not (as the Prayer Book Ordinal affirms) originally *threefold*, but *twofold* : ' Essential ' and ' Dependent ' (p. 8) ;
- (b) That the first ' bishops ' were not *all* endowed with Apostolic authority, as *shaliachs* (p. 9) ;
- (c) That the Three Orders did not become clearly differentiated till towards the end of the second century (p. 308) ;
- (d) That the ' Seven ' (*Acts* vi), whom the Prayer Book Ordinal describes as ' deacons,' were in reality ' presbyters,' or even ' bishops ' (pp. 150, 232).

(a) That Christ gave to His Apostles (and to them alone) a unique authority — that of a *shaliach* or plenipotentiary ambassador, whose actions *must* be endorsed by the authority that commissioned him.⁸

(b) That this *shaliachate* was ' deliberately handed on ' by the Apostles to the monarchical bishops, and by them to their successors. These form the ' Essential Ministry,' by which the Church is constituted and sustained, and without which there cannot be a real Church at all.⁹

(c) That all other ministries in the Church are ' dependent ' on the bishop. He may delegate to the Priesthood authority to celebrate the Eucharist, or to the Laity (on emergency) to administer Baptism ; but he alone remains ' the Essential Minister ' of *all* the Sacraments.¹⁰

From these principles it follows that :

(d) ' The Historic Episcopate ' is of little or no value as a historic *fact*, unless it is also recognized as the exclusive channel of Divine Authority.¹¹

⁵ In *The Apostolic Ministry* (1946), by Bishop K. E. Kirk, Dom Gregory Dix, Fr. Hebert, Dr. T. G. Jalland, Dr. A. M. Farrer, etc.

⁶ See *Tracts for the Times* (1833-), especially Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 36. For them, the Episcopate alone was not enough : ' Without Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, there is no Church.' (Cassan, *Sermons*, p. 40.)

⁷ *The Apostolic Ministry* departs from the Tractarian doctrine on the following points :

⁸ Dom Gregory Dix makes the astonishing claim that ' the *shaliach's* action irrevocably commits even his Divine Principal ; for God has conditioned Himself by His own word of promise.' (p. 230.)

⁹ So Bishop Kirk (pp. 10-12, 25-30), Dr. Farrer (p. 180), etc.

¹⁰ p. 528 (Fr. Hebert).

¹¹ Fr. Hebert describes ' The Historic Episcopate,' without ' any theory or interpretation of it ' (Lambeth, 1930), as ' a question-begging phrase with which well-meaning ecclesiastical diplomats have sought to unite us all by a misunderstanding.' (p. 297.)

(e) The non-episcopal ministries, because they lack this Apostolic Commission, cannot be recognized as valid ministries, nor their sacraments as valid sacraments.¹²

In some respects this theory is less rigid than that of the Tractarians; but in practice it is no less uncompromising.

'We must' (says Bishop Kirk) 'accept the ministry as it is, with absolute and quite unqualified finality,' and insist upon 'the awful rigidity of the doctrine of apostolic succession for a true ministry.' (p. 25.)

Wherever such an attitude is adopted, the possibility of Inter-Communion between episcopal and non-episcopal Churches cannot even be contemplated.

3. The claim that a fixed form of Creed is 'of Divine obligation.'

Some Christians hold that a fixed form of belief has been so directly 'given' by God to the Church that it is of final authority for Christians in all places and times.¹³ In that case, even though this formula may not always form part of the actual administration of the Sacrament, it is held to be so essential a part of the Christian Faith that there can be no full Christian Communion with those who do not assent to it.

4. The Dogma of the Equality of all Ministries.

Most of the 'Absolutisms' that we have been considering are found among those who adhere to the Catholic, Orthodox, or Conservative Traditions. But sometimes a demand has been put forward by Free Churchmen, even of 'liberal' views, that before Christian Unity can be contemplated those concerned *must* agree

¹² Bishop Kirk describes non-episcopal ministries as 'pretensed,' and their sacraments as 'mere *simulacra* of the sacraments.' (pp. 36, 40.) Here, he is following the older Tractarians: 'A Dissenting minister is no minister at all, but merely a layman; and not only so, but, as Uzziah was, an unhallowed intruder into the sanctuary.' (Cassan, *op. cit.*, p. 84.) From this, it was a perfectly logical conclusion that to expect any spiritual benefit from such 'unhallowed ministries' would be 'an impious mockery.' (*op. cit.*, p. 85.) Bishop Kirk, however, surprises us by maintaining that these 'pretensed ministries' have been 'blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace.' (p. 40.) He does not indicate what has led him to this unexpected conclusion, which certainly does not seem to follow logically from his main thesis. We can hardly suppose that it is based on the *apparent signs* of the operations of the Holy Spirit outside the episcopal ministry; for any such 'appeal to experience' is disallowed in *The Apostolic Ministry* as evidence in matters of Christian doctrine. (p. 534.)

¹³ e.g., The Creeds, in the Catholic and Orthodox traditions;
The whole Bible, in 'Fundamentalist' circles;
The Deity of Christ, laid down as essential by the World Council of Churches.

that all types of Christian ministry are *equally* valid.¹⁴ This also is, in effect, an 'absolutist' dogma; for exact equality is rarely susceptible of proof, and indeed is contrary to general experience.

There are other kinds of Absolutisms besides these which we have considered; but these may suffice to indicate that an 'absolutist' attitude always sets limits to the possibility of Inter-Communion.¹⁵

B. 'Relativist' Attitudes.

A relativist attitude towards Religion generally follows from a recognition of the limitations of the human mind, so that in all human thoughts, words and deeds there must always be an element of relative imperfection.¹⁶

In the matter of Inter-Communion, the Relativist declines to ascribe absolute finality to any particular form of the ministry or sacraments. Moreover, if the grace of God is conceived of in personal rather than impersonal terms, this also tends to encourage a relativist attitude. For personal activity (at least as known to us in human life) can rarely be rigidly defined or classified. Our own personal influence upon each other does not begin or end at a fixed point or line; nor can we put 'labels' on different types of it, as we can 'label' goods of different qualities. Among Absolutists, however, God's operations are constantly pictured in terms that are really suitable only to material things. 'Grace' is described as 'flowing through' certain visible channels, with the suggestion that it is confined to these. Clear-cut distinctions are drawn between grace of different kinds — 'Sacramental Grace,'

¹⁴ See, e.g., Prof. Vernon Bartlett's letter to Dr. Banninga, *re* the South India Scheme of Union: 'Insist on the absolute equality of the ministries of the uniting Churches.' (Bell, *Documents*, I, p. 320.)

¹⁵ Canon Green of Norwich regards 'the absolute necessity of the Apostolic Succession' as 'a Red Light,' indicating 'Danger! Stop!' (*The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 546); Bishop Robinson of the S.P.G., in a recent letter to the Press, prefers the metaphor of 'an Amber Light,' bidding us 'Go Slow!'

¹⁶ The Absolutist would probably reply that in certain cases man's imperfection is over-ruled by God, who provides for His Church rites or creeds that are absolutely perfect and true. The Relativist would doubtless rejoin that such a 'suspension' of human activity by Divine operation is not in accordance with the Christian Revelation of God's method of dealing with His children.

The contrast between the Absolutist and Relativist attitudes is clearly set forth in the duologue between Dr. W. Sanday and Dr. N. P. Williams, *Form and Content in the Christian Tradition* (1916); particularly in Dr. Sanday's opening essay, *Continuity of Thought and Relativity of Expression*.

the Grace of Orders,' and so forth.¹⁷ Such language implies that God's gifts to us are being conceived of as quasi-material substances, rather than as God's gracious personal activity in us. Furthermore, a *person* is able to a considerable extent to adapt and modify the material means employed. If, then, God operates personally through the sacraments, they should be regarded as effective *symbols*, rather than as mere instruments.¹⁸

Many of those who are willing to adopt a 'relativist' attitude to the problem of Inter-Communion are 'absolutist' with regard to other elements of Christian Faith and practice.¹⁹ But they do not regard as absolutely essential the ministrations of an episcopally-ordained priest or presbyter, nor the use of one of the traditional Liturgies of the Church. This is, in fact, the attitude of the majority of Evangelical Christians—Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc. For these, there is therefore no *a priori* objection to mutual Inter-Communion between them.

¹⁷ The distinction sometimes drawn between the '*virtus sacramenti*' and the '*res sacramenti*' in the Eucharist (*vide* Darwell Stone's *Outlines of Christian Dogma*, p. 189) is intelligible only when the '*res*' is regarded as a thing, rather than as a person.

¹⁸ A 'symbol' works only when the *mind of a person* has chosen it and given to it a meaning. For example, when a vehicle is stopped by a brake on the wheels, this is 'instrumental.' The effect takes place *ex opere operato*, whether the pressure is applied by a human foot or a mechanical device. But a vehicle may also be stopped (no less effectively) by means of traffic-lights, or by railway signals; these work by means of 'symbolism.' Their effectiveness depends on the meaning attached to them by a living person, who may adopt various methods of consequent action (*e.g.*, he may, instead of using his brake, put his engine into low gear). Moreover, the symbol itself (*e.g.*, the colours of traffic-lights, or the position of a railway signal-arm) can be changed, by agreement, and still prove equally effective. So, if Sacraments are regarded primarily as symbols, their outward forms need not necessarily be forever unchangeable.

¹⁹ For example: Bishop Newbigin, of the Church of South India, while vehemently rebutting the claims of *The Apostolic Ministry*, insists on the absoluteness of the historic Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ (*The Reunion of the Church*, p. 59). Another upholder of non-episcopal ministries affirms that 'the office of the ministry [in some form or other] is essential for the existence of the Church.' (D. Jenkins, *The Gift of the Ministry*, p. 41.)

Most Christians would also regard as essential the use of bread and wine, and Words of Institution, in the Eucharist, because these were enjoined by our Lord. But in this matter of the 'Dominical Institution' of the Holy Communion we may recall the words of a careful and orthodox Anglican scholar, Canon Quick: 'It is now generally admitted that the actual command to baptize does not belong to the most primitive and authentic record of our Lord's sayings; and though the direct evidence for His institution of the Eucharist is much stronger, . . . differences of interpretation are still possible.' (*The Christian Sacraments*, p. 118.)

Some go further, and welcome to Communion 'all who love the Lord Jesus Christ,' demanding no test beyond the simple *desire* to partake of the Sacrament in obedience to our Lord's command, and leaving the responsibility on the shoulders of the individual worshipper.²⁰ All these alike would reject the absolutist claims of the Papacy, as well as those of *The Apostolic Ministry*.²¹

But here we are confronted by the fact that among Anglicans, even of the Evangelical school, who have no objection *on principle* to Inter-Communion, there are very few who are prepared to *practise* it. This is a cause of much perplexity, and some

²⁰ This is the custom with some of the Baptist and Methodist Churches. See *Rules and Customs of Churches Concerning Inter-Communion* (W.C.F.O., pp. 28, 37).

²¹ The main thesis of *The Apostolic Ministry* has been widely challenged, on the following grounds, among others :

- (a) The whole idea of the *shaliach* or plenipotentiary, whose decrees even God is bound to endorse, is to many minds irreverent and shocking ; for it virtually exalts man above God. Bishop S. Neill has even said : ' We cannot recognize as *Christian* the doctrine of God which seems to under-lie this imposing theological edifice.' (*The Ministry of the Church*, p. 28.)
- (b) The interpretations of Scripture are forced and arbitrary, supported by ' special pleading ' of an unconvincing kind, and involving (as the writers themselves admit) the rejection of two of the fundamental principles of Anglicanism : the Sufficiency of Scripture (Art. VI) and Justification by Faith only (Art. XI). (See pp. 289, 301.)
- (c) The subordination of the Church to the Ministry really implies a ' Low Church ' view, which fails to recognize the *whole* Church as the Spirit-filled Body of Christ. (pp. 26-29.)
- (d) The presentation of the post-Reformation Tradition of the Church of England is one-sided and unfair. The numerous cases of the recognition of non-episcopal ministers are dismissed as ' exceptional ' ; and the clear statements of leading Divines, such as Cosin, Andrewes, Hooker, and even Laud, that such such recognition had always been the tradition of the Reformed Church of England (see Bishop Bell's *Christian Unity—the Anglican Position*, pp. 20-50, or Bishop Hunkin's *Episcopal Ordination*, chapters ii-iv), are simply ignored.

It has also been noted that while *The Apostolic Ministry* subjects God to the decrees of His *shaliach*, the writers themselves show but little regard for the actual pronouncements of *shaliachs*. Resolutions of the Lambeth Conferences, surely, gatherings of *shaliachs*?) are dismissed as ' dry bones,' or ' unhappy phrases ' (pp. 530, 297) ; and those *shaliachs* (including two archbishops) who endorsed the recognition of non-episcopal ministries as ' real and effective, within their several spheres,' are charged with ' mischievous and studied ambiguity.' (Fr. Hebert, *The Form of the Church*, p. 119.) So the authority of the *shaliachate* does not seem to weigh very heavily on its (theoretical) advocates !

resentment, among Free Churchmen.²² The reasons for this apparent inconsistency may be seen when we turn to consider another classification of attitudes.'

III. 'PRACTICAL' AND 'THEORETICAL' ATTITUDES

Some types of mind are practical and realistic, interested in 'facts,' and ready to adjust their attitude to new situations. Others are theoretical, adhering firmly to 'principles' and the conclusions that follow logically from them. Now in the matter of Inter-Communion, practical considerations may act either as deterrents or as encouragement to action.

A. *Practical considerations which act as deterrents.*

Most of the Anglicans who would personally be glad to join in Communion with other Churches, but never actually do so, are influenced by practical considerations.

- (a) They believe that such action would be contrary to the rule of their Church that Inter-Communion must wait until complete organic and doctrinal unity has been achieved.²³
- (b) They fear that precipitate action might engender controversy, or even 'split the Church.'

Such considerations, though not based on theological principles, are not to be dismissed as merely cowardly or unworthy.

B. *Practical considerations which favour Inter-Communion.*

In many lands, and particularly in mission-fields where 'Comity of Missions' is observed,²⁴ the desirability — almost the necessity — of immediate Inter-Communion is obvious; and this has led many Anglicans to reconsider the theological principles which they formerly held.²⁵

²² The Federal Council of the Free Churches, replying to the *Lambeth Appeal* of 1920, said: 'We regret that the plan put forward is precisely that which would be followed in the case of persons with no kind of ministry. . . . What is conceded in language is not to be put into effect in practice. . . . Discussion will lack reality as long as it is unaccompanied by acts of more definite unity in worship.' (Bell, *Documents*, I, p. 164; II, p. 70.)

²³ See Resolution 42 of the Lambeth Conference, 1930.

²⁴ 'Comity of Missions' denotes the agreement made between the larger denominations in many mission-fields, that each will keep to its own area, and not follow with its own ministrations those of its people who move into another 'denominational field.'

²⁵ It is significant that many of the most ardent Anglican advocates of the South India Scheme of Union belong to a school of thought far removed from the traditions of the other uniting Churches. See also *Non-Theological Factors in Church Union* (W.C.F.O., 1937).

With others; the 'Appeal to Experience' — another 'practical consideration' — appears decisive. They cannot see that the 'fruits of the Spirit' are in any way less manifest in the non-episcopal Churches than in those which retain the Apostolic Succession. So they argue: 'If *God* makes no difference between them, in the bestowal of His grace, is not this a sign that in *His* sight both are "valid"? Who then are *we*, that we should be stricter than God? Would not refusal on our part to inter-communicate be almost a sin against God?'

IV. INTER-COMMUNION AS PRACTISED TO-DAY

A. *In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches*, it is officially forbidden. Occasionally it is practised by individuals.²⁶

B. *In the non-episcopal Churches* it is freely practised among the larger denominations, but a few small sects observe 'Close Communion.'²⁷

C. *Among Anglicans*, there are a few who do, on certain occasions,²⁸ receive Communion from non-episcopal ministers. Probably none of these would favour 'promiscuous Inter-Communion'; but they would justify the occasional practice of it on the following grounds:

1. That in the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-nine Articles, which are the only *authoritative* formularies of the Church of England, there is no express prohibition of such Inter-Communion. (The recommendations of 'Lambeth' are, at most, advisory.)

2. That the main Anglican Tradition since the Reformation has permitted Inter-Communion with 'other Reformed Churches' under certain circumstances.

²⁶ The present writer has had experience of this, among members of the Orthodox Syrian Church in South India.

²⁷ See *Rules and Customs of Churches re Inter-Communion* (W.C.F.O., pp. 28-42 and 45-52). Many Free Churchmen feel that in this respect they at present enjoy a *wider* Christian fellowship than is available for Anglicans or other episcopalians.

²⁸ For example, where the ministrations of their own Church are not available; or at inter-denominational conferences or services of worship. Such 'occasional' Inter-Communion was strongly advocated, as far back as 1919, by Bishop E. A. Burroughs of Ripon in *Towards Reunion*. 'Mutual admission to the Lord's Table' was also advocated in the Resolutions of the Second Mansfield Conference, 1920; and among those who signed these Resolutions were William Temple (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), J. R. Darbyshire (late Archbishop of Cape Town), Percy Dearmer, H. Anson (now Master of the Temple), and the late Canons T. A. Lacey and O. C. Quick. (S.P.C.K. *Documents on Unity*, pp. 84 f.)

3. That full organic and doctrinal unity of Christendom will best be promoted by *practising* Inter-Communion as an *interim* measure.

4. That the 'appeal to experience' is decisively in favour of it.

5. That although it is admittedly a serious matter for an individual Church member to disregard the recommendations of Church authorities, such action may be permissible, or even obligatory, for the individual, if it is undertaken in conscientious response to what is believed to be a call from God.

V. THE AGAPE, OR 'LOVE-FEAST,' AND ITS BEARING UPON INTER-COMMUNION

(This was revived, in Holy Week, 1949, at Hilgay, Norfolk, by the Anglicans and Methodists jointly, under the leadership of the Rector, the Rev. G. I. F. Thomson.)²⁹

This experiment has been welcomed by many as a courageous practical step, 'by-passing' the problems involved in Inter-Communion, and at the same time providing a spiritually helpful manifestation of Christian fellowship. It is not an entire novelty, but the revival of a custom of the primitive Church, which has been practised from time to time in many Christian bodies.³⁰

It is, however, viewed by others with some misgivings. Some fear lest, if the *Agape* should come to be widely practised, it may (in the Free Churches especially) come to take the place of Holy Communion and lead to the neglect of the latter. At Hilgay it was strongly emphasized that the *Agape* is something *quite different* from Holy Communion. Now, for those who hold a 'Catholic' conception of the Eucharist, this distinction is clear enough; for in the *Agape* there is no suggestion of any supernatural change in the elements, as there is in the Eucharist. But for those who hold a 'Reformed' doctrine, the distinction is less clear. If the Eucharist is primarily symbolic, it expresses the ideal of every Christian meal, and is 'the hallowing of common life.'³¹ In that case, in the *Agape*, too, there is a 'sacramental'

²⁹ A description of this *Agape*, by Mr. Thomson, is shortly to be published; and descriptions of it appeared in many Christian newspapers shortly after the event.

³⁰ Especially in the Methodist and Moravian traditions; also in the custom of distributing 'pain bénit' (hallowed bread) in the Roman Catholic Church. See the *Bulletins* of the Friends of Reunion, 1949; and Bishop J. A. Maclean's article *Agape*, in *Hastings' E.R.E.*, Vol. I.

³¹ One of the 'revived emphases' in the Iona Community; see *We shall Rebuild*, by Dr. George Macleod, p. 83.

element, as well as in the Eucharist, and the two have many points in common.

But while this indicates the need for care in the revival of the *Agape*, it certainly should not hinder further experiments along this fresh line of Christian co-operation.

VI. SOME GENERAL CONCLUSIONS ³²

1. For the present, theological agreement on the doctrines of Ministry and Sacraments seems to be as far off as ever.³³ Hence there is no immediate prospect of any official sanction for Inter-Communion on a wider scale than it is practised at present — except, perhaps, in the Churches overseas, where 'pastoral urgency' may override theological principles.

2. At the same time, the situation remains most unsatisfactory. The frontiers between denominations do not coincide with the real 'frontiers of belief.' Consequently many Christians find themselves forbidden to partake of Communion with fellow-Christians whose views are indistinguishable from their own, and yet required to join in Communion with members of their own Church whose views of the Sacrament they regard as fundamentally erroneous. All this produces acute tensions and a state of unstable equilibrium.³⁴

3. In this situation, can anything useful be done by those who reckon themselves 'Friends of Reunion'?

(a) Can we agree to encourage an attitude of mutual respect between those who *are* prepared, and those who are *not* prepared, to practise Inter-Communion beyond the limits at present officially sanctioned by their Churches; neither charging the former with 'disloyalty' and attempting to check them, nor accusing the latter of 'narrow-mindedness' and urging them to go beyond their conscience?

(b) Can we agree upon two principles which, if accepted, would certainly open the way for fresh possibilities of inter-denominational understanding:

³² For these conclusions the writer alone is responsible.

³³ Dom Gregory Dix, in *The Apostolic Ministry*, says: 'The difference [between Catholic and Protestant] is a difference about the very nature of religion itself.' p. 302.)

³⁴ Because of this, the *Ecclesia Anglicana* to-day, instead of being a real 'Bridge-Church,' providing contacts between separated points of view, often seems more like an arch precariously poised between two receding banks, and nervously afraid of any movement, to the Right or to the Left.

(i) That our present 'unhappy divisions' are (at least for the most part) 'schisms *within* the Universal Church,'³⁵ so that our negotiations are on 'a family basis'?

(ii) That in the present divided state of Christendom, *no* existing ministry or sacrament is *fully* 'valid,' or can perfectly express the mind of Christ; so that we all need the mutual enrichment that others can give us;³⁶

(c) Most essential of all is one thing we can all do—to help the strengthening of understanding, sympathy, and love between the separated communions. The growth of this has borne fruit in recent years, in the Oecumenical Movement, the World Council of Churches, and innumerable local acts of Christian co-operation.³⁷ This is of vital importance; for it is only in such an atmosphere that Inter-Communion can be a true Sacrament, expressing in outward and visible form the inward and spiritual unity that is given to us by the Holy Spirit of God.

DEAN INGE'S DIARY

By THE EDITOR

*THE Diary of a Dean*¹ consists of extracts selected, arranged and edited by Dr. Inge from his diary, supplemented occasionally from that of Mrs. Inge, during the period he was Dean of St. Paul's, 1911—1934. It is prefaced by a valuable Introduction from the Dean's pen.

Of a diary presented in this form it may be justly claimed that the half is greater than the whole. For few diaries are worth publishing *in toto*. Pepys and Boswell are rare birds among diarists. When, however, a diarist does his editing with a view to publication, and that some years after the experiences he records have happened; when old animosities, anxieties, prejudices,

³⁵ This view has been upheld by Bishop Bell of Chichester (see his *Christian Unity—the Anglican Position*, 1948 (p. 178), and by Bishop Rawlinson of Derby at the Chichester Conference, 1949 (Report, § 7).

³⁶ See O. C. Quick, *The Christian Sacraments*, 1927 (p. 145).

³⁷ 'There has been a great change in the whole climate of Church relations during the last thirty years.' (Bishop G. K. A. Bell, *Christian Unity*, 1948, p. 175.)

¹ *Diary of a Dean, 1911-1934*, by W. R. Inge, K.C.V.O., F.B.A., D.D. (Hutchinsons, 1949; 21s.)

rivalries, injustices have become matters of comparative indifference, and most of the people concerned with them have died, then the record of memorable incidents in a varied life, preserving not least of all the *obiter dicta* of notable persons, provides for its readers the pleasure derived from good conversation. Such is the character of Dean Inge's latest volume.

It was Mr. Asquith who selected Dr. Inge for the Deanery of St. Paul's. Why he was led to do so we are not told. We are told that Archbishop Davidson had his own favourite for the post, Canon Mason, a learned Cambridge theologian. The amazing success of Asquith's appointment once again illustrates the value of ecclesiastical appointments to high office being made by laymen of distinction who possess the confidence of the nation and are not ecclesiastically-minded.

The gloomy Dean, as the Press dubbed him in the early period of his Metropolitan career, seems to have had, with rare exceptions, a very happy life in London — due in no small degree to the gifts and graces of Mrs. Inge. The Dean, in what can be the most influential ecclesiastical post in England, although possessed of amazing ability, had to work extremely hard in response to the many calls made upon him — and many of them extra-official. As a preacher, lecturer, essayist and publicist his productivity was enormous. To his immense erudition and intellectual acumen he added the ability of rapid and brilliant composition. His popularity was remarkable. To what was it due?

In social life, to those who did not know him well, the Dean seemed shy, taciturn, unapproachable. He possessed none of those popular gifts of heartiness, geniality and sympathy which so often attract but deceive the public. But to those who know English people there are other gifts much more popular than amiability. 'A man may smile and smile and smile and be a villain.' The first of these gifts is courage. A critic wrote of the late Earl Rosebery: 'Clever man, charming man, but always flinches at the critical moment.' Dean Inge never flinched. The Press were amazed at his frankness. He never avoided difficult and dangerous themes. When asked hard questions he never hedged.

The insight of his thought and the incisiveness of his phrase secured admiring attention. A distinguished scientist said: 'When Streeter (Provost of Queen's College, Oxford) deals with science the scientist can tell at once that Streeter is not a scientist, but when Inge deals with science he is such a clever fellow that you cannot tell he is not a scientist.'

His quality as a preacher was unique — popular, but exhibiting no popular arts. We recall a sermon he preached before the University of Oxford criticising Continental modernism as expounded by Loisy in *L'Evangile et l'Eglise*. 'This writer,' said the Dean, 'strives to squeeze the Catholic Church into the Manger of Bethlehem.' Later in his sermon the Dean described the same church as 'terrible as an army with banners,' marching through blood up to the horse's bridles.' He possessed wonderful eloquence of phrase but he delivered it all in measured tones without gesture, and without any change of facial expression, a veritable Second Newman in Newman's old pulpit.

Closely allied to his quality as a preacher was his quality as a teacher. This shewed itself not only in his exposition of the past but also in his interpretation of the present. It was due to this quality that English Modernism owed so much to his leadership.

He was for ten years President of the Modern Churchmen's Union and never once missed delivering the Presidential address at the opening of the Modern Churchmen's annual conferences. These carefully prepared addresses set a standard which reflected itself in the papers and discussions which followed and did not a little to secure public influence for the educational work of that society.

He wrote on March 27, 1916:

'My mother never really forgave me for not being an Anglo-Catholic. When a friend wrote to congratulate her on my appointment to St. Paul's, he was startled to find that my promotion had given her no pleasure. It was bad enough to be a "Low Churchman"; but a "Broad Churchman" was damned below Judas.' (p. 34.)

We must apologize to our readers for having been led away from the rich treasures of the Dean's diary by the richer treasures of the Dean's personality, to which of course the limitations of his diary preclude his doing justice. His diary is full of good things, but we must restrict ourselves to those of particular interest to Modern Churchmen. Our opening citation presents what church journalists would describe as the Dean's gloomy side — really the exercise of the prophetic office which forbade him to say 'peace, peace, when there was no peace.'

'My comments on the debates in Convocation and the Church Assembly are hardly fit for publication. I remember a discussion on the "cursing psalms"—the 137th for example. They are not read in the synagogues. Dean Wace of Canterbury hoped that they would be retained, because they express our justifiable feelings towards the Germans. Another voter

on the same side said to me, "Of course every well-informed Christian knows that those verses refer only to our spiritual enemies." I used to come away feeling almost in despair about the Church of England.' (p. 9.)

October 2, 1911. 'I had a walk with the Bishop of London (Winnington Ingram), who wanted to talk about Thompson's book on miracles which has attracted so much attention. He is bent on attacking it in his charge to his clergy next week, and wanted to know what to say. The mental processes of the Bishop are, for a man in his position, of almost childish simplicity. "Unless the tomb was found empty on Easter morning, our faith is vain. In the next generation belief in the incarnation will disappear. What shocks me is that these views should be put before the immature minds of undergraduates." Alas, the minds of undergraduates, or of many of them, are more mature than the Bishop's own.' (p. 12.)

February 3-5, 1923. 'To Oxford. Lock, Warden of Keble, preached a good University sermon to five undergraduates. That would be my fate if I took a professorship at Oxford.' (p. 82.)

The Dean's diary records interesting impressions of Bishop Henson:

'I had not very satisfactory talks with Herbert. He is "unstable as water." He blames and dislikes the Modern Churchmen's Union. Like Lord Melbourne he says, "Why can't they let it alone?" Liberalism in theology will not get much more help from Herbert Dunelm' (p. 70.)

February 5, 1934. 'Dining with the Brotherhood I found that Herbert Henson was annoyed with me for approving of the invitation to a Unitarian to preach in Liverpool Cathedral. I have never read better sermons than those of J. H. Thom, a Unitarian divine, and Martineau's books are of great apologetic value. I have never found much to differ from in my talks with Jacks, though he goes too far, in my opinion, with Loisy about the historical Christ. Surely there are many subjects on which an Anglican congregation might profit by sitting under a devout and thoughtful Unitarian, or a Quaker. I am all in favour of trying to close schisms, if it can be done without sacrifice of principle. I think an earlier Henson would have agreed with me.' (p. 177.)

May 7, 1922. 'I preached at St. Peter's in the East, under the auspices of the Modern Churchmen's Union. The church was not nearly large enough for the crowds who came to hear me. I emphasized the historical character of our religion and its foundation in the Person of Christ. I wished to dissociate myself from continental Modernists like Loisy, who think that the historical Jesus was only "a peasant of limited intelligence."' (p. 76.)

Referring to Lippmann's *Preface to Morals*:

January 15, 1931. '... The main argument of Lippmann's book is that "distinterestedness" is the vital part of higher religion. Aldous Huxley has since said the same, calling it, less happily, non-attachment. When I was ordained deacon by the saintly Bishop King of Lincoln the only thing that the Bishop said to me was "Be disinterested; that is what really matters." Perhaps no wiser counsel could be given to a young man who might be suspected of being ambitious. I have always remem-

bered it; though I have taken occasion to say, "Don't fancy yourself disinterested when you are only uninterested, and don't fancy yourself attracted by God when you are only repelled by man." (p. 155.)

the Dean's interest in psychiatry:

July 26, 1912. 'An interesting meeting of the Clerical and Medical Committee. Dr. McComb, of the Boston Emmanuel Movement, gave evidence quite unlike the crafty and shifty witnesses whom we have had before. He makes no pretence to work miraculous cures. He works with the doctors, and merely practises psychiatry in a systematic manner. Most of his patients are alcoholics.' (p. 16.)

January 20, 1913. 'A most interesting meeting of the Clerical and Medical Committee. Drs. Bramwell and Wright, who treat patients by suggestion, gave a straightforward testimony. The impression is growing upon me that the medical dogma, that no organic disease can be cured by suggestion, needs careful scrutiny. Bramwell, in answer to a question from me, said that many diseases which were formerly regarded as functional are now recognized as organic, and that some of the cures recorded by him were very near organic diseases, as Sir Rickman Godlee admitted. A scientific man, whose case had been diagnosed as cerebrospinal meningitis, as tumour on the brain, and as locomotor ataxy, was cured by suggestion, and a few months later he was climbing the Alps.' (p. 18.)

We conclude our selection of citations with one from Mrs. Inge:

August 18, 1913. 'Herbert Henson and I discussed the Davidsons. H.: "I have a great regard for Mrs. Davidson. She inspires me with a feeling of deep affection. I know no one like her. When I am with her I feel that I am in the presence of a sublime Archbishop Tait." I: "Her likeness to her father is extraordinary." H.: "One of the most impressive things about Mrs. Davidson is that she fills her position to perfection, which cannot be said of all ladies in her position, immaculate though many of them may be. She is always there, but never outsteps the boundary line, except for her extraordinary ideas on women suffrage. She is a wonderful woman. She seems to make people better by her speech alone. I am afraid I cannot speak so enthusiastically of the Archbishop. I have no patience with a man who is a coward." I: "I do not think he is a coward, but his statesmanship has always been to keep a united front if possible." H.: "He is no statesman." I: "I have been told by many that he is listened to with respect in the House of Lords." H.: "I don't believe it. Lang has a much better hearing. When he told me that there might be a secession of the High Church party from the Church, I answered that the time for secessions was past. There is no place for them to go to. It is nonsense to talk like that." I: "I think you see the Archbishop at his best when a younger man puts his case before him. He listens with such patience and courtesy." H.: "I quite agree, and when I speak to him I am abashed, utterly abashed. But I have no longer the pleasure I once had in speaking to him. If he had made a policy for himself and stood to it, he would have had a tremendous following; now he has none. I think one of the most impressive prophecies that have come true was by Bishop Westcott, who was speaking about the second-rate stuff that was taking Holy Orders. We do not notice it now, but the next generation will have no men to put in high places.'" (p. 22.)

SRI AUROBINDO : Mystic, Metaphysician, Poet

By SIR ROBERT BRISTOW, C.I.E.

I

SRI Aurobindo Ghose is a wise man of the East who has sought to compass universe and eternity in one supra-global conception. Like all creative workers he assimilates and translates, a process described adequately enough in Bertrand Russell's *History of Western Philosophy* (p. 145):

'When I write a book on some subject, I must first soak myself in detail, until all the separate parts of the subject-matter are familiar; then, some day, if I am fortunate, I perceive the whole, with all its parts duly inter-related. After that, I only have to write down what I have seen. The nearest analogy is first walking all over a mountain in a mist, until every path and ridge and valley is separately familiar, and then, from a distance, seeing the mountain whole and clear in bright sunshine.'

This experience is familiar to all creative workers, and an interesting parallel may be drawn from civil engineering. There are few problems so complex as that of the creation and successful maintenance of a harbour across or behind the foreshore line. Every case demands a characteristic solution—just as there is but one solution to a jig-saw puzzle. The pieces of this puzzle, which the harbour engineer must discover for himself, are the component parts of all the natural forces which play upon that part of the coastline now, and which may play upon it later, either by the construction of the harbour itself or by any possible combination of natural forces not immediately apparent. Thus he determines the interplay of tidal and fluvial waters, of wind-wave and ground-swell, of alternate periods of coast erosion and accretion, of contending littoral drifts and secular changes, of alluvial deposits, and the contour changes above and below sea level. All these are linked up with the records, centuries old perhaps, of rainfall, wind (forces and directions), exceptional storms, cyclones, earthquakes and sea-quakes, of temperatures, maximum floods and tidal currents, of geological changes and other exceptional phenomena. It is within this global perspective of natural forces that the harbour engineer must cunningly trace what nature is willing to permit, and will even help to perform, at that particular point on the earth's surface; and to this end he must seek the ultimate sources of tidal and wave energy, of rivers and soils, of ground-swell and ocean drifts from earth, sea and sky alike.

Sri Aurobindo's material is not physical but the metaphysics of India. He has soaked himself in the *Rig Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Bhagavad Gita*; doubtless he gained much from his

fourteen years' experience of Western life and thought in England; doubtless also his excursion into Indian politics and his subsequent leisure in an Indian jail gave him much food for reflection and assimilation. Nor can it be forgotten that the *Gita* itself is undated and may belong to the early Christian age, though a more ancient origin has been claimed with some degree of plausibility. As to this Sir Edwin Arnold, in the preface to his metrical translation, *The Song Celestial*, says :

'The weight of evidence, however, tends to place its composition at about the third century after Christ; and perhaps there are really echoes in this Brahmanic poem of the lessons of Galilee, and of the Syrian incarnation.'

As is well known, controversy has arisen between Pandits and missionaries on this point, the parallelisms being close, even verbally; but, whether or no, the fact remains that in absorbing the *Gita* Sri Aurobindo has absorbed much Christian teaching with it. His great work, *The Life Divine*, which is the subject of this article, seems at first to give the impression one receives in turning a large globe in all directions, trying to find a beginning and an end; and though there is a pattern and a sequence, there is not, as in other surveys, a datum line, a measured base from which to start a trigonometrical survey by astronomic triangulation. But, just as we use the equator as the zero of latitude, and Greenwich as that of longitude, so the supra-sphere of the *Life Divine* must have some guiding lines, though in truth its equator is at any maximum points of the globe and its Greenwich a finite point of an infinite Whole.

Thus the reading of *The Life Divine* is like the turning of a globe wherein, rightly understood, is all there is to know and no part is greater or less than another, and all is one. But the image is complicated by the fact that the observer is also in a process of evolution; for his mind, if informed on the physical cosmos, must analogize his knowledge into a new language, or, if informed on the theological side, must recast his dogmas into new forms and patterns; and this, I daresay, will come unwillingly to many theologians, whereas the hopeful student of nature and life leaps to embrace the Substance of Reality which he instinctively recognizes.

II

Here, to adapt the classic brevity of *Who's Who*, is what we know of Sri Aurobindo Ghose :

Born of educated forbears in Western Bengal 1872. Educated at Loreto College, Darjeeling, and at St. Paul's, London, and King's, Cambridge. Showed brilliant gifts as a classical scholar.



Spent 14 years in England. Published much poetry. Sought new expressions of old truths by which India would find rebirth. Turned from this to politics in 1906 at Calcutta. Influential Congressman. Went to jail for 'political' offences. Studied the *Bhagavad Gita*. Retired in 1910 to Pondicherry via Chandernagore, in French territory (S.E. coast of India). Studied *Yoga*. Published *The Arya*, a journal of philosophy, until 1921. Wrote consistently, using much material later in *The Life Divine* and other works. Publishers, chiefly The Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, 24 volumes in all; religion, philosophy, poetry and miscellaneous. Published of him, in this country, *Sri Aurobindo, Indian poet, philosopher and mystic*, by Professor G. H. Langley (former Vice-Chancellor, University of Dacca, E. Bengal), issued by The Royal India and Pakistan Society, 3 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1. Foreword by The Marquess of Zetland, K.G. (President of the Society).

The particulars given above are taken from Professor Langley's excellent little book which also provides a pen sketch (from *The Times Literary Supplement*) of the head of Sri Aurobindo, large-featured, hirsute, with glowing eyes.

Before proceeding to describe his message (as well as I can in so short a compass) I may perhaps quote from two of his poems which, I think, give an illuminating clue to his mental outlook.

OCEAN ONENESS

' Silence is around me, wideness ineffable;
White birds on the ocean diving and wandering;
A soundless sea on a voiceless heaven—
Azure on azure—is mutely gazing.

Identified with silence and boundlessness
My spirit widens, clasping the universe
Till all that seemed becomes the Real,
One in a mighty and single vastness.

Someone broods there nameless and bodiless,
Conscious and lonely, deathless and infinite,
And, sole in a still eternal rapture,
Gathers all things to his heart for ever.'

Secondly, obviously inspired by an Eastern sunrise, where the unbroken sea meets an opalescent sky:

' My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight,
My body is God's happy living tool,
My spirit a vast sun of deathless light.'

The teaching itself is horizon-like in its boundaries. Sri Aurobindo does not construct straight Roman roads, ruthless

an efficiency and dotted with milestones; you must wind your way round slow contours, resting at the view-points, looking back at the past, and forward to the goal, if there be one. Often he makes you pause and envy the timeless East and its patient pilgrims. This is no book for go-getters.

There are two parts of *The Life Divine*, the first of 441 pages and the second (bound in two volumes) of 1186, three volumes in all. Here is his point of departure :

‘The earliest pre-occupation of man in his awakened thoughts and, as it seems, his inevitable and ultimate preoccupation—for it survives the longest periods of scepticism and returns after every banishment—is also the highest which his thoughts can envisage. It manifests itself in the divination of Godhead, the impulse towards perfection, the search after pure Truth and unmixed Bliss, the sense of a secret immortality. The ancient dawns of human knowledge have left us their witness to this constant aspiration; to-day we see a humanity satiated but not satisfied by victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature preparing to return to its primæval longings. The earliest formula of Wisdom promises to be its last—God, Light, Freedom, Immortality.’

This, of course, is the ‘That art Thou’ motif, the *philosophia perennis* of the sixth century B.C. before which there are no written records of Indian religions, though they date from a remoter age. Nevertheless, he says, it is true that :

‘to the ordinary material intellect which takes its present organization of consciousness for the limit of its possibilities, the direct contradiction of the unrealized ideals with the realized fact is a final argument against their validity. But, if we take a more deliberate view of the world’s workings, that direct opposition appears rather as a part of Nature’s profoundest method, and the seal of her completest sanction’

or he goes on to say :

‘All problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony. They arise from the perception of an unsolved discord, and the instinct of an undiscovered agreement or unity.’ (My italics.)

It is from these two paragraphs that the vast content of his thought derives its source. Man is given innate Wisdom; but in this world, he must find it in the conflict of opposites until unity is born; and this is the key to life. All knowledge and experience is complementary and man becomes man by knowing God and achieving oneness with man.

III

This, then, is the first subject in the Aurobindo Symphony, and it should be noted that he heads the chapter with quotations not from *Psalm* 139 and the two Great Commandments but with two passages from the *Rig Veda*, typically Eastern in their meta-

physical content. There follows a developing and working-out passage (as in musical 'form') through the materialist and ascetic negations of the human aspiration towards Reality, and from thence to the omnipresence of Reality, to the destiny of the individual and his place in the universe. Here are two key passages :

'We start then with the conception of omnipresent Reality of which neither the Non-Being at the one end nor the universe at the other are negations that annul; they are rather different states of the Reality, obverse and reverse affirmations. The highest experience of this Reality in the universe shows it to be not only a conscious Existence but a supreme Intelligence and force, and a self-existent Bliss; and beyond the universe it is still some other unknowable existence, some utter and ineffable Bliss. Therefore we are justified in supposing that even the dualities of the universe, when interpreted not as now by our sensational and partial conceptions, but by our liberated intelligence and experience, will be also resolved into those highest terms. . . . This creed is given, indeed, to humanity to support it on its journey, until it arrives at a stage of development when faith will be turned into knowledge and perfect experience, and Wisdom will be justified of her works.' (Vol. I, chap. 4, p. 49.)

It will be understood again that this familiar conclusion is not derived from Christianity but from Hindu sources, of which one is quoted at the head of Chapter 4 :

'If one knows Him as Brahman the Non-Being, he becomes merely the non-existent. If one knows that Brahman Is, then is he known as the real in existence.' (*Upanishad* II, 6.)

All Sri Aurobindo's writings combine a singular quality of poetic thought with logical exposition, and at this point, as a rider to the above, I cannot do better than quote from Professor Langley's book (pp. x, xi, Author's Preface) :

' . . . closely allied with Aurobindo's endeavour to reinterpret the Hindu conception of the essential union of the individual with the Infinite is the contribution he makes towards dispelling what he regards as a widespread error in the interpretation of this conception and the experience from which it arises, whether such misinterpretation be by Eastern or by Western thinkers. The fundamental oneness of the subject in personal consciousness with the Supreme Consciousness is frequently interpreted as entailing the final immersion of the individual in the Infinite with which it is one, and consequently the eventual loss of personality. Western thought and feeling are characterized by a deep sense of the value of personal independence and freedom, and naturally find repugnant any way of thinking that fails to support personal worth. Aurobindo also possesses this deep sense of the value of the individual. *At the same time he tries to show that the distinctness and worth of persons as persons and their essential union with the Divine are not incompatible conceptions.* On the other hand, he maintains that individuals grow and develop their natural worth only in so far as they enter into enjoyment of their union with the Divine. *The individual consciousness is not merged into the Infinite but is the highest manifestation of its creative power.*' (My italics.)

This seems to me to be an expressive and admirable summary of one of the most important aspects of *The Life Divine*. Its apparent rejection of *Nirvana* and its relationship with practical Mysticism, neo-Platonism, and the Christian life itself will be immediately obvious, and we may I think regard it as the second great subject or *motif* in the book. This, and the first already mentioned, are powerful links with Western Christianity, and the fact that they have been forged from the precious metals of Hindu metaphysics is doubly corroborative, probably conclusive. In Sri Aurobindo's own words :

'The ascent to the divine Life is the human journey, the Work of works, the acceptable Sacrifice. . . . This Truth, that has to emerge out of the phenomenal world's contradictions, is declared to be an infinite Bliss and self-conscious Existence, the same everywhere, in all things, in all times and beyond Time, and aware of itself behind all these phenomena by whose intensest vibrations of activity, or by whose largest totality, it can never be entirely expressed or in any way limited; for it is self-existent and does not depend for its being upon its manifestations. They represent it, but do not exhaust it; point to it but do not reveal it. . . . It becomes itself in the world by knowing itself; it knows itself by becoming itself.' (Vol. I, chap. 6, p. 66.)

IV

In searching for a third motive relative to and proceeding from the first and second, one must traverse a long stretch of the winding road, a task exacting much mental toil and patience. Here are some of the signposts as we slowly pass them by : the Ego and the Dualities, the methods of Vedantic knowledge, the pure Existence, delights of Existence, the super-mind as Creator, the Divine Soul, the ascent and problem of life, the ascending series of Substance, the seven-fold chord of Being, the Super-mind, Mind, and the Over-mind *Maya*. The fact is that every link in this chain of reasoning seems to possess equal importance with the rest from a strictly logical point of view, and yet, at the same time, the imagination, fed by its poetical and spiritual apprehensions, continually leaps ahead to its goal which is the God-consciousness. Consequently we are not surprised when on reaching the last chapter of Volume I (No. 28) we discover these four graphic texts :

1. There is a Permanent, a Truth hidden by a Truth where the Sun unyokes his horses. The ten hundreds (of his rays) come together—That One. I saw the most glorious of the Forms of the Gods. (*Rig Veda* V, 62, 1.)

2. The face of Truth is hidden by a golden lid; that remove, O Fostering Sun, for the Law of the Truth, for sight. O Sun, O sole Seer, marshal thy rays, gather them together—let me see of thy happiest form of all; that Conscious Being everywhere, He am I. (*Isha Upanishad*, vv. 15 and 16.)

3. The Truth, the Right, the Vast. (*Athara Veda XII, 1, 1.*)

4. It became both truth and falsehood. It became the Truth, *even all this that is.* (My italics.) (*Taittiriya Upanishad II, 6.*)

It is extremely difficult to put in a few words what is contained in these quotations, especially the last. Very briefly and inadequately we may say that ignorance, evil and strife are all parts of truth, not illusion. Yet, beyond and above all,

'There is still the unknown, underlying Oneness which compels us to strive slowly towards some form of harmony, of interdependence, of concurring of discords, or a difficult unity. But it is only the evolution in us of the concealed superconscious powers of cosmic Truth and of the Reality in which they are one that the harmony and unity we strive for can be dynamically realized in the very fibre of our being and all its self-expression, and not merely in imperfect attempts, in incomplete constructions, and ever-changing approximations. The higher ranges of spiritual Mind have to open upon our being and consciousness, and also that which is beyond even spiritual Mind must appear in us if we are to fulfil the divine possibility of our birth into cosmic existence. (Vol. I, p. 435.)

Nothing could be better than the Marquess of Zetland's summary of these conclusions on page viii of Professor Langley's book :

'God-consciousness is a stage in the spiritual progress of man which has its analogies on the lower planes of existence, for just as life appropriates and utilizes matter, and mind appropriates and utilizes life, so in the life Divine does spiritual consciousness appropriate and transform mind. It is this stage which man must strive to reach if his long pilgrimage on earth is not to be brought to naught.'

When we reach the two volumes which form Part II and make a reconnaissance survey of their contents we find what appears to be a serious attempt to apprehend the infinite in finite terms, for the first quotation, under the general heading of Indeterminates, Cosmic Determinations and the Indeterminable is the following verse 7 of the *Mandukya Upanishad* :

'The Unseen with whom there can be no pragmatic relations, unseizable, featureless, unthinkable, undesignable by name, whose substance is the certitude of One Self, in whom world-existence is stilled, who is all peace and bliss—that is the Self, *that is what must be known.*' (My italics.)

To a practical mind this seems a contradiction in terms, but the mystic would at once recognize its truth, for it is his constant lament that he cannot convey what he has seen and known. The whole of Part II derives from this apparent contradiction and proceeds in leisurely stages, not along a road, but as an Indian river gliding easily past recognizable features: the Eternal and the Individual, the Divine and Undivine, the Cosmic Illusion, Reality and the Cosmic Illusion. Thence to Ignorance, its boundaries and origin, its relation to the Consciousness force, its connections with falsehood, error, wrong and evil. At this point the river, as it

ears the ocean, gathers speed and, by the assimilation of its tributaries, opens upon Reality and the integrated knowledge, the evolutionary process of ascent by integration, the philosophy of rebirth, the ascent towards super-mind, the Gnostic being and the Divine Life. It will be realized that such a conception can hardly be summarized. The connecting links are extremely gradual, as in a space-time continuum, and the best I can do is to photograph the river and its banks at a few of its major features.

V

The opening of Part II starts with an examination of consciousness in relation to knowledge and ignorance :

‘A Consciousness-Force, everywhere inherent in Existence, acting even when concealed, is the creator of the worlds, the occult secret of Nature. But in our material world and in our own being consciousness has a double aspect; there is a force of Knowledge, there is a force of Ignorance. In the infinite consciousness of a self-aware infinite Existence, knowledge must be everywhere implicit or operative in the very grain of its action; but we see here at the beginning of things, apparent as the base or the nature of the creative world—energy, an Inconscience, a total Nescience. This is the stock with which the material world commences: consciousness and knowledge emerge at first in obscure infinitesimal movements, at points, in little quanta which associate . . . there is a tardy and difficult evolution . . . more and more gains are written on the blank slate of the Nescience.’

Consciousness-Force operating on a blank slate . . . ‘In the beginning was Mind’ . . . A little farther on he says :

‘The first aspect of cosmic existence is an Infinite which is to our perception an indeterminate, if not indeterminable. In this Infinite the universe itself, whether in its aspect of Energy or its aspect of structure, appears as an indeterminate determination, a “boundless finite”—paradoxical but necessary expressions which would seem to indicate that we are face to face with a supra-rational mystery as the base of things.’

All this, of course, will be familiar in other terms, as for example in the ideas of immanence and the Aristotelian and Stoic philosophy; in Bruno and his master idea of unity; in Spinoza and his dictum ‘God and the processes of Nature are one,’ or his conception of an underlying Reality, or *Sub-stance*. In fact the whole of this volume may be regarded as a new version of Spinoza—we see it as a wide dissertation on Spinoza’s creative sequence: survival-necessity’ determines instinct, instinct determines desire, desire determines thought, and thought action. But for Spinoza, ‘desires vary with dispositions,’ and this introduces the sequence of ignorance, intelligence and morality, in which is devised the reconciliation of opposites as necessary processes of moral evolution.

Sri Aurobindo, pursuing his Eastern thought-habit, quotes from one of the *Upanishads* (V, 5, 1) and corroborates this in different terms :

‘The first and the highest are truth ; in the middle there is falsehood, but it is taken between the truth on both sides of it, and it draws its being from the truth.’ (My italics.)

If Spinoza may be regarded as the greatest originator and unifier of many branches of philosophy in the West, it is fair to say that Sri Aurobindo is his Eastern compeer, and the two have followed like avenues of thought.

So the author reaches his final theme : true Self is to be won by the Truth and by an integral knowledge (*Upanishad* III, 1, 5) :

‘Ignorance is a separation of the being from its own integrality and entire reality ; its boundaries are determined by this. . . . The integral Knowledge is something that is already there in the integral Reality, . . . it must be discovered or uncovered. . . . An integral spiritual consciousness carries in it a knowledge of all the terms of its being ; it links the highest to the lowest through all the mediating terms and achieves an indivisible whole.’ (My italics.)

In his final chapter, ‘The Divine Life,’ the author lays bare the superficiality of a life inspired by a surface consciousness and its inevitable consequences :

‘Reason and Science can only help by standardizing, by fixing everything into an artificially arranged and mechanized unity of material life. A greater whole-being, whole-knowledge, whole-power is needed to weld all into a greater unity of whole-life.’ (p. 1162.)

That is as far as we need go here. It is a conclusion which is now being reached by every branch of thought, East and West, and it is confirmed by every day’s experience throughout the whole world. Our material castles in the air are tottering storey by storey, and there is as yet no voice great enough to sound above the political and economic clamour, though I think Mr. Lawrence Hyde’s book, *The Nameless Faith* (Rider & Co.), is a most thorough and scholarly attempt at the reinterpretation of what is so commonly termed Christianity, but is not—even though we may differ from some of his views.

VI

I have tried to give briefly the drift of Sri Aurobindo’s teaching in his own words as proceeding from his particular gifts, his qualifications of education and experience, and from his great powers of assimilation and re-expression. What is its particular reference to the earliest records of Christianity?

(1) Both he and Jesus the Christ became God-conscious through mystical communion ; both perceived that God Is, and

that He is Infinite Divine Personality; that man was created with a Divine inheritance and that he accepts or rejects this inheritance by becoming or not becoming God-conscious; that God-consciousness is derived from direct communion and from experience of life, the first largely in retirement and stillness, the second largely in the world of action. Through God-consciousness man himself becomes an immortal consciousness. Each proclaims the truth that 'in my Father's house are many mansions,' though not in the same words.

(2) Direct communion through mysticism is a gift which, like all gifts, needs cultivating. Many have it; most have not, though they may and do have an instinctive 'awareness.' For those who cannot achieve direct knowing there is a way of life which is implicit in Sri Aurobindo and explicit in Jesus; but in Jesus, this way is dependent on making first an act of faith and *believing* that God Is. The revelation of this truth then comes hand in hand with experience of a life guided and controlled by the *Word*, which, with Sri Aurobindo, is based chiefly, I think, on parts of the *Baghavat-Gita*, and with Christianity on the original teachings of Jesus. In each case the issue is the sacrifice of self in the battle of life. Between Krishna and Arjuna it arose over a discussion of war; between Christ and man it arises over the struggle of life itself.

(3) With Sri Aurobindo, ignorance, error, and sin are necessary parts of experience unless and until men turn to Light by revelation, faith, or experience. With Jesus, the words 'thy sins be forgiven' were the response to a witness of faith, which in itself begins a healing process of mind and body.

(4) The significance of Sri Aurobindo to-day is threefold:

(a) he is a man of brilliant parts, of experience, culture and character, who has for forty years given himself to meditation, communion, and action in so far that he has published his findings;

(b) those findings, arising from the study of his country's own sacred literature, resemble a judge's summing-up (in 1,627 pages of close reasoning) of the mysteries of life, death and rebirth;

(c) in the end, and implicitly if not explicitly, they reveal Jesus: the Founder of Christianity, the manifestation on earth of the Word, the Sacrifice of self, the Rebirth, and 'The Life Divine' Itself.

What one misses in Sri Aurobindo is the *compassion* of Jesus. If a non-swimmer has fallen overboard Jesus does not stand on the bridge and tell him to imitate the movements of a frog; He descends to save him. Jesus, the Word, full of grace and truth, was also the compassionate Friend Who went about doing good, and could say more in a parable than Sri Aurobindo can pack in a philosophy. It is this ever-present assurance of comradeship in difficulty, of hope and strength, of saving Love, that marks Jesus as the Son of God and the Son of Man, and justifies His truest epitaph: 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.' Nevertheless, Sri Aurobindo, the Mystic, Realist and Hindu Modernist, knowingly or not, has helped to unveil that Appealing Figure, and has so rendered possible a spiritual *rapprochement* between East and West which may and will have, sooner or later, incalculable consequences.

BOOK REVIEWS

DR. NIEBUHR'S LATEST CONTRIBUTION *

For those who know Reinhold Niebuhr only through his Gifford Lectures, this new work, *Faith and History*, may at first sight seem to embody interesting changes in emphasis. It is natural that in a work dealing with Christian and alternative conceptions of history attention should be paid by the author to matters not at the forefront in a discussion of *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. But, one may ask, did not Niebuhr in the second volume of those lectures (*Human Destiny*) spend most of his time talking about the Christian interpretation of history? To get some idea of how Niebuhr's thinking has progressed, one might do well to read again chapter I—IV and X of that second volume before beginning *Faith and History*. The new book is easier to read, less burdened with long periodic sentences and involved jargon, and emphatically more conciliatory in tone. One of the characteristics of Niebuhr's writing seven years ago, when *Human Destiny* first appeared, was the bold manner in which he singled out all attempts at defining human destiny, thoroughly denounced them, and finally left only his own 'Biblical-Christian' version intact. In the new book, the method is the same, with one outstanding difference. In Chapter XII, 'False Absolutes in Christian Interpretations of History,' he goes beyond the earlier method, taking up the sword against almost all the traditional Christian views, this time leaving a 'Biblical-Christian' view which is just as final as before but stripped of many conventional trappings, Catholic and Protestant. English readers will find his treatment of current Anglo-Catholic versions particularly interesting. Dealing with Dr. Mascalls' notion of the 'stratification of knowledge' in the mind of Christ and its implications for a Christian philosophy of life and history, he says:—

'It is difficult to understand what could possibly be gained by such implausible efforts. The meaning of Christ's revelatory power, as apprehended by faith, is imperilled and a logical absurdity takes its place.' (p. 192.)

* *Faith and History*, by Reinhold Niebuhr. (Nisbet & Co., London. 1949.)

He is just as severe in his criticism of contemporary views on priestly orders (pp. 271-2) and the sacraments (p. 274).

In the earlier work one was constantly driven to ask just what Niebuhr meant by 'the' Biblical view. In his discussion of the Fall, for example, we were told that the story of Adam was a myth, but a myth which enshrined an absolute truth. His use of the word myth seemed somewhat equivocal, as did that of the many terms garnered from the jargon of psycho-analysis. 'Anxiety' was a favourite word (used far more sparingly in the present book), yet its exact terminations in meaning were never quite clear. However much we may wonder about certain terms in this new book, he is more generally unequivocal, as for example in an estimate of New Testament miracles:—

'The effort to certify this triumph [God's triumph over evil through love] through specific historical details may well be regarded as an expression of a skepticism which runs through the whole history of Christianity. The account of Christ's virgin birth serves the same purpose. Christ cannot be known except by faith and repentance; but a faith, not quite sure of itself always hopes to suppress its skepticism by establishing the revelatory depth of a fact through its miraculous character. This type of miracle is in opposition to true faith.' (p. 167.)

Here at least there is no softening of the judgment by talk about myths which, though myths, nevertheless must be accepted as positively 'true.' (Some may recall that the form of Niebuhr's argument is precisely the one scored by the Bishop of Birmingham in his broadcast discussion with Canon Alan Richardson.)

If Niebuhr is content to devalue much of traditional theological formulation and to dismiss as 'implausible' many modern attempts at reconstruction, we should not too hastily suppose that his primary interests have changed. In this book they are stated more precisely than ever before:—

'... it is necessary to disavow the purpose of proving the Christian interpretation rationally acceptable, in the sense that such a comparison could rationally compel modern man to accept the Christian faith. The Christian interpretation of life and history is rooted in a faith prompted by repentance. It will not be convincing except to the soul which has found the profoundest enigma of existence, not in the evil surrounding it but in itself.' (p. 114.)

If it is unfair to class Niebuhr as simply the American counterpart of Karl Barth, it is none the less clear that at this point the systems of the two men are tangential. The first half of *Faith and History* reiterates the writer's perennial message: man's moral impotence and God's utterly transcendent character. For Niebuhr, it is the failure to recognise this basic fact which corrupts all non-'Biblical' views of history. All of the alternative theories which he elects to discuss are marred, so we are told, by foolishly regarding the historical process as itself redemptive. When he comes to the modern secularist forms of Existentialism, he is bound to admit that 'the modern view' has become transformed, choosing now to remain in despair. Basically his quarrel is with points of view which have long since ceased to have much compelling force in the modern world, even, we are prone to think, in the United States. Few any longer hold to the notion of Progress which Niebuhr so violently flays. Nor are cyclical theories, which he simply labels 'classical' defended by any great number of adherents. It is noteworthy that Niebuhr here should fall into his own trap. Constantly he criticises 'modern man's' concepts as failing to do justice to history in all of its complexity and richness,

but do his own broad generalisations, like 'classical,' 'modern,' 'romantic,' or even 'Biblical,' do justice to this complexity? It is true that many of his shrewdest observations result from adroit use of generalisation, but they also betray. So much has to be included in the idea of Romanticism, for example, that it ceases to have meaning. And for a man who takes such pains to examine modern frailties, Niebuhr appears seriously out of touch with many modern currents of opinion. Followers of developments in contemporary fiction will find much to cavil at in pronouncements like this: 'Ernest Hemingway is the only modern American novelist who deals with the problem of death 'basically' (p. 177). Aside from the question-begging term 'basically,' the statement is plainly uninformed. Similarly, he is less at ease with the history of contemporary philosophy than the finality of his judgments should entail. Thus we find that (p. 122) he virtually equates 'modern' with Hegelian. In nearly all his refutations of particular modern or ancient interpretations, specialists will find dissatisfying elements: his treatment of mysticism (p. 17ff.), his discovery of 'radical discontinuities' in the history of historiography, and in his idea that 'the Biblical view' is fully epitomised in God's choice of Israel under Moses. All of the generalisations are selective, and may, in the final analysis, be as self-refuting as the naturalism which he is so anxious to expose.

For all his abuse of John Dewey's philosophical position, Niebuhr himself shows marked affinities with the pragmatists—almost an inevitability in American thought to-day. We are everywhere reminded that the best refutation of modern optimism is the actual state of the world. Modern man, he says, is now in such and such a condition because for several hundred years men have placed their trust in a particular set of propositions. He invites us then, by implication, to examine his alternative propositions so that we may judge for ourselves whether it is plausible to suppose that they would necessarily entail better or different conditions. But this is precisely what his set of propositions will not let us do. For Niebuhr's solution is placed outside history and 'at the very limits of human reason.' In an excellent study of Niebuhr's earlier work (*Morals and the New Theology*, Gollancz, 1947), Professor H. D. Lewis has shown what effects these propositions may well have *within* history—the poisoning of man's own moral consciousness. Niebuhr obviously feels that the modern rejection of 'The' Christian interpretation can be traced simply to a general modern refusal to admit the contingency of human existence. But in point of fact, many who are quite willing to make this admission still cannot see the relevance of his 'crisis' thinking. Why is it, we would ask, that so many particularly among the young, in the face of chaotic world conditions, seek refuge not in any redemptive act outside history and beyond reason but in the most basic and minimal satisfaction afforded through personal relationships? This is just as real a problem as any which Niebuhr explores, and if our task is to illustrate the relevance of Christianity for contemporary problems, it will not do merely to class this attitude as the fruit of sinful pride and let it go at that.

One would like to examine many of Niebuhr's *dicta* at length, for almost each paragraph in the book invites close scrutiny. *Faith and History*, at its best, shows remarkable though fragmentary insights into many vexing questions, particularly those which apply to the American social scene which the author knows so well. But the time is long overdue for a full-length treatment of his more ultimate presuppositions and conclusions. It is to be hoped that this book, which condenses so much of what he has said before, may call such a study into being.

H. E. Root

A STUDY IN BOARDING SCHOOL EDUCATION*

The subtitle, 'A Study in Boarding School Education,' is a truer guide than its title to the contents of this short work (110 pp.) by the Headmaster of Shrewsbury. Himself a product of a day school, but for thirteen years headmaster of a boarding school, Mr. Wolfenden discusses the characteristics of boarding schools, and their place in the national system of education. He is not concerned, except incidentally, with the complex of loyalties and misconceptions which centre round that much-abused term 'Public Schools.' He presents, with fairness and candour, and with real insight into boy-nature, the advantages and disadvantages of boarding schools as compared with day schools—with evident conviction that for many (or most) children boarding education is preferable, but with very clear perception of the dangers which beset a 'small and self-centred community.' The book is well-balanced and wise.

Little is said about religion, but Christian aims and values are fundamental. For example—'It is often objected that daily attendance at Chapel is "simply a matter of routine."' That, if the words be properly understood, is precisely its value. It is part of the day's routine or the normal way of spending every day, that the community should worship, just as it is part of the day's routine that it should eat, sleep, work, and take some exercise.' Or again—'It is not humbug to assert that the school chapel is the heart and powerhouse of all its life. The daily gathering together in the building set apart for worship is the outward and visible sign of what, at any rate, ought to be a genuine inward and spiritual grace. That a school or its members may often fall short of full Christian living should surprise nobody; the point is that they daily renew their efforts and daily submit themselves to judgment by the highest standards they know?'

That is the right emphasis in school religion—nothing showy or spasmodic, but a steady undercurrent of responsibility to God in daily living which permeates the whole community's aims and ideals, and supplies for individuals the true foundation of Christian discipleship.

H. K. LUCE

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN AMERICA

To-day the eyes of Europe—at least Western Europe—look westward to the 'athletic democracy,' as Walt Whitman called the United States. Knowledge of what is being thought, said and done there has grown astonishingly since the second phase of the World war. It is, however, a reproach to our civilisation that so few books on religion cross the Atlantic from West to East. Even an author in England finds it difficult to procure one of his own books published in America in these days of dollar shortage.

I am glad, therefore, to have before me for brief review two books on religion recently published in America. Both are excellently produced according to the high standards we now confidently expect from their publishers.

The first is *Religion in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Vergilius Ferm (New York: The Philosophical Library, 5 dollars, 1948). It consists of twenty-eight essays by competent authorities who write from the inside on twenty-eight historic living religions which have come down from a long past, together with those younger in years, and an endeavour to appraise them. It may be said that history and exposition are more prominent than appraisal.

* *The Public Schools To-Day*, by J. F. Wolfenden. (University of London Press. 1948. 4/6)

Inevitable, indeed. For, like everything else to-day, religious thought and practice are in the melting-pot, everywhere and all the time. Historians are commoner than philosophers and prophets. Yet the editor has had prominently in mind in preparing this book the vital and absorbing question: What kind of religion will emerge from the increasing unification of peoples and traditions? The editor's dynamic and optimistic outlook is expressed in his preface:

'It is not conservatism or traditionalism in itself that can be held to be nature's curse. It is the traditionalism that blocks the ever flowing *élan vital* of life itself which is the curse, the stubborn resistance to the very principle of change and creative power that is life. Our era reflects this creative power in a mighty surge. Any attempt to halt it now is an invitation to death. The religions of the world need not be ashamed of their several heritages, but only of any disposition to self-deceit which blocks progress and suppresses its prophets. The world that is opening up is insisting that all values be recognised, whatever the heritage. The chief sin that will beset religiously committed men is the worship of their heritage to the degree that they are blind to the creative values thrusting themselves upon us and giving us our sacred opportunity. To be specific, a Christian who believes in the supreme spiritual worth of Jesus of Nazareth even to the point of a Trinitarian theology need not make his loyalty to the Jesus of history and theology a cause greater than loyalty to what he must believe, if he is honest with himself, to be the universal spirit of Christ wherever found in any traditional faith. A Scripture becomes genuinely sacred in so far as its appeal touches the soul of man of whatever faith; the sacredness which tradition gives to it is far less significant. This is only to say that the world of value is fundamentally an oceanic world, one that is *horizontal* fundamentally and self-authenticating. It is no time for bickering over small issues. The twentieth century era which began only yesterday will not last out its expected span unless the lesson of warning is heeded! there is to be one world or none.'

It is not a book on denominations but on what the editor has regarded as 'the larger divisions of religious ideologies and practices.' Thus Protestantism is covered by the two-fold division of Liberal and Conservative; Catholicism in the three-fold expression, Roman, Greek and Anglo-Catholic. Besides, there are essays on the Latter Day Saints, Christian Science, Swedenborgianism, The Society of Friends, The Salvation Army, Jehovah's Witnesses. Judaism is covered by its three-fold division of Conservative, Reform, and its recently developed interpretation known as 'Reconstructionism.' Further, American reaction to inherited faiths such as Ethical Culture and Religious Humanism are expounded from within. In addition, there are chapters on the chief non-Christian religions. Each essay ends with a competent bibliography.

The whole is a useful symposium, and reflects the forward-looking spirit of the best minds in America in days of challenge.

The second volume is of very different character, though concerned with the same great question, namely, what is true religion? The author finds the answer in the mind of Jesus. (*The Religion of Maturity*, by John Wick Bowman; Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, three dollars, 1948). When the English reader sees on the wrapper the statement that this book is a '7,500 dollar Abingdon-Cokesbury Award Co-Winner,' what thoughts arise? Can it indeed be true that an American publishing house can offer a prize of over

£2,500 for a book on religion? This fact in itself is a striking comment on the American situation in contrast to that of the British.

This is a book of what is usually called biblical theology, and reveals a wide acquaintance with recent theological literature. It is written from the standpoint of a sane liberal Protestantism and should stimulate progressive Christian thought in the pulpits of the United States. It is well arranged for the use of study-groups.

The substance of the book is a study of the teaching of Jesus in the light of the central conviction that He was the Fulfiller and Fulfilment of Prophecy. Subsequent to 'the prophetic word of revelation' in Israel Dr. Bowman sees three unproductive attempts in post-exile Judaism to implement it, and calls them 'The Religion of the Altar,' 'The Religion of the Book,' and 'The Religion of the Throne': or what roughly may be called Sacerdotalism, Scribism, and Apocalypticism. He regards the religion of the altar as the religion of the emotions, the religion of the book as the religion of the intellect, and the religion of the throne as the religion of the will which, curiously enough, 'can find no place for ethics save as *Interimsethic* for a select group living under ideal conditions.' *The Religion of Maturity* is revealed in the Mind of Jesus, who saw the three religions of Altar, Book and Throne to be so morally inadequate to the needs of men that he prophesied their disuse.

This book by an American Protestant biblical theologian reflects the growing conviction among the thoughtful in all countries that religion without vital prophecy is husk without kernel.

C. J. WRIGHT

St. Augustine's College, Canterbury.

THROUGH THE EYES OF A SECOND-CENTURY PHYSICIAN*

It is a relief to turn from the prevailing, but surely temporary, theological climate of faith and fancy to this scholarly monograph, which proceeds along lines of rational thought and investigation. The author breaks new ground in his examination of six passing references to Jews and Christians made in the course of Galen's (A.D. 129—199) philosophical and medical works: three of them usually accepted as genuine, the other three—culled from surviving fragments of Arabic translations of Galen's Greek—now demonstrated also to be genuine. How interesting it is to have the reflections of a pagan on Christianity at the time when the Canon of Scripture was forming and the world-wide Church was emerging.

In the following paragraphs, the quoted words are from Galen's six incidental references.

The first of these compares

'those who practice medicine without any scientific knowledge of it to Moses, . . . since it is his way to write his books without demonstration, saying "God commanded, God spoke".'

From this quotation Mr. Walzer draws the justified inferences that a knowledge of the books attributed to Moses was not uncommon in the educated Roman world for which Galen wrote, and that appeals to Revelation were not regarded by Galen as a proper substitute for scientific demonstration.

The second reference occurs in Galen's lengthy discussion of the Biblical view of creation, to which he is led whilst dealing with the unvarying length of the eyelashes. For Moses, he says,

* *Galen on Jews and Christians*, by R. Walzer. (O.U.P., Oxford Classical and Philosophical Monographs, 1949; 10/6.)

'it seems enough to say that God simply willed the arrangement of matter and it was presently arranged in due order; for he believes everything to be possible with God, even should He wish to make a bull or a horse out of ashes. We, however, say that certain things are impossible by nature and that God does not even attempt such things at all but that He chooses the best out of the possibilities of becoming . . . We say thus that God is the cause both of the choice of the best in the products of creation themselves and the selection of the matter.'

The implication of this, says our author, is that in the established order of Galen's world there are no miraculous interventions. Mr. Walzer also notes the absence of any Jewish reaction to Galen's disapproval, the Jews having lost their earlier missionary spirit and with it the desire to offer the world a reasoned faith. Maimonides indeed took up the challenge, but a thousand years later; it was Origen who replied (and even he belatedly) to such as Galen that God's omnipotence must be understood in the light of His spiritual nature, which He cannot contradict.

In the third reference Christians are mentioned for the first time, being bracketed with Jews in Galen's reproach addressed to physicians and philosophers who are like them in 'clinging fast to their schools.';

'One might more easily teach novelties to the followers of Moses and Christ.'

Accordingly, in Galen's eyes, the defect of Jews and Christians is their traditionalist dogmatism, which precludes them from accepting new truth and from following an argument to its conclusion. The work in which this passage occurs is usually assigned to the last years of Marcus Aurelius or to the first years of Commodus, i.e. about 180 A.D., and Mr. Walzer considers that Galen's knowledge of Christians was derived from the Court circles to which he was physician and in which Christians now began to be favoured.

In the fourth and fifth references Galen deprecates

'talk of undemonstrated laws, as if one had come into the school of Moses and Christ,' whose followers teach their pupils 'to accept everything on faith.'

We see from this that faith, in its original Christian sense of trust in God and fidelity to Him, had in Galen's time already been overlaid by the Jewish attitude to their 'Law,' and had largely given way to an unquestioning acceptance of tradition. How different from the passionate reasoning of the Pauline epistles and from the doctrine of the Incarnation propounded by the Fourth Evangelist! But Galen's reproach also calls to mind the later, urgent attempts to remove it on the part of the Christians like Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Eusebius, who tried to build up a new, Christian, philosophy and *demonstratio evangelica*.

The sixth reference has the greatest interest; Lietzmann omits it from his history of the Church but Mr. Walzer has ably rehabilitated it, tracing it back from the Arabic tradition to its starting point in the Imperial age, proving that it cannot have been forged by Arab or Syriac Christians, and showing it to be the corner stone of an adequate understanding of Galen's interest in the new phenomenon of Christianity.

'Most people are unable to follow any demonstrative argument consecutively; hence they need parables, and benefit from them' . . . 'just as now we see the people called Christians drawing their faith from parables (and miracles), and yet sometimes acting in the same way (as those who philosophise). For their contempt of death (and of its sequel)

is patent to us every day; . . . they also number individuals who, in self-discipline and self-control in matters of food and drink, and in their keen pursuit of justice, have attained a pitch not inferior to that of genuine philosophers.'

From this we see that Galen was impressed, as our author says, by the successful Christian attempt at the pursuit of virtue and self-control, but could not understand why Christians did not construct a philosophy of equally high standard instead of relying on parables and miracles. The word 'miracles' is not fully supported as a genuine part of the text, but it makes little difference, for the parables here mentioned would be the equivalent of myths, which commonly included miracles (Strabo (ob. A.D. 19) similarly emphasises that religious awe cannot be produced in the unphilosophical multitude without myths and miraculous tales). Thus Christianity, as known to Galen, must have consisted in little more than a supernatural tale, unsupported by any serious effort to establish its historical foundations or present it as philosophic theology. But if the accessory features of the story had now come into undue prominence at the expense of its main feature, i.e. the unveiling of the character of God in the Jesus of history—Galen's unprejudiced criticisms seem to have had their effect; they are important, as Mr. Walzer says, for our understanding of Church history. For, in the last years of the great pagan's life, Roman Christians from Asia Minor, headed by the learned leather merchant Theodotus of Byzantium—all of them Galen's frank admirers—tried to secure urgent intellectual improvements in the presentation of Christianity. Using for the first time post-Aristotelian logic, and applying for the first time to the Bible the methods of Greek textual criticism, this group of Christian reformers constructed an 'Adoptionist' Christology, teaching that the man Jesus, being inspired by the Spirit of God, was thus adopted to be God's Christ. Their views, says Mr. Walzer, were fully in accord with the intellectual principles of such as Galen, for whom the Logos Christology would have possessed substantial philosophical shortcomings; but they were immediately and vehemently denounced by the Roman bishops Victor and Hippolytus.

We cannot but reflect that had Galen been converted to Christianity, he too would have been branded as a heretic; so that his writings, like those of Aristotle, would have been preserved in the Arabic schools alone; whereas his reputation as a well-disposed pagan ensured that his works came very soon to be included in the Christian syllabus of higher education. Strange are the chances of history!

Mr. Walzer's brief but full study of Galen's six references to Jews and Christians is much to be welcomed, not only as a fine piece of pure scholarship but also as helping us to reconstruct with greater accuracy the second century background on which Christianity stood out predominantly as an ethic and from which it went forward to become a philosophy.

R. D. RICHARDSON

AN APPEAL TO ANTI-CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS

Canon R. J. Campbell, a great Christian preacher, has written a book for which there is increasing need to-day. *The Life of the World to Come** is addressed primarily to spiritualists and the facts set forth in the volume 'are

* *The Life of the World to Come*, by R. J. Campbell, D.D., Canon Emeritus of Chichester. (Longmans, 1948. 12/6.)

assembled for the benefit of spiritualists who are confessedly and militantly anti-Christian.'

'This kind of Spiritualism is doing harm, and if successful would defeat its own professed aims.'

In his Prologue Canon Campbell writes :

'The objection may be made that the author does not know the movement from within. This is true, and he would be sorry to misrepresent the conscientious convictions of men and women identified with it whose chief aim is to bring consolation to the bereaved and to stimulate endeavour towards living a good life. But he does know something of the *subject*. He has belonged to the Society for Psychical Research for more than forty years, though he has never attended any of its meetings. He joined it in order to obtain and study its privately circulated *Proceedings* as they were issued ; and this he has done regularly. He has also had the privilege of the intimate friendship of one of its most active members, the late Sir William Barrett, and is his literary trustee. Sir Oliver Lodge was likewise a friend of long standing. It was through these two men that he acquired such knowledge of the assured results of psychical investigation into the problem of human survival after physical death as he may justifiably claim to possess.' (p. 2.)

Dr. Campbell emphasizes a very serious defect in this anti-Christian spiritualism—namely, that it lacks

'devotional fervour, insight, and spiritual power. Greetings from the beloved dead cannot compensate for its absence, even if they be real beyond a peradventure. Love to God, especially to God in Christ, is the mainspring of Christian character. Do the assailants of Christian faith give us anything equal to it? If not, should not the serious inquirer ask why?' (p. 3.)

In the pages that follow Dr. Campbell, by means of copious citations, sets out to show in an evolutionary sequence that the Christian hope of a future life has its psychological and moral roots in actual experience. The citations are of a most comprehensive character and include many from Roman Catholic writers.

Dr. Campbell treats the important distinctions between survival and resurrection and between immortality and eternal life. Of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Dr. Campbell writes :

'No event in history is better attested, despite the difficulties attaching to a fully satisfying estimate of the consistency and credibility of the earliest literary references to it ; for if it had not been firmly believed by its original promulgators to be true the Christian Church could not have come into existence at all, much less have grown and extended in the face of incredulity and persecution. As Dr. Joseph Klausner, who claims to be the first loyal adherent of Judaism to write a sympathetic study of Jesus of Nazareth, says, great spiritual movements do not arise from imposture.' But

'Dr. Klausner himself suggests that the disciples were mistaken in their quite honest testimony.' (p. 95.)

Dr. Campbell is particularly cogent in his treatment of the Pauline evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul's statement is often overlooked : 'Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?' (*I Cor.* ix, 1). But in the three accounts of the Vision on the Damascus road related in *Acts* it is not explicitly stated that St. Paul did *see* Jesus on that occasion. When then did St. Paul *see* Him?

Dr. Campbell suggests it was at Corinth. But it is also recorded that St. Paul had a vision of Jesus in Jerusalem (*Acts* xxiii, 11) and also a vision of Him in the shipwreck off Malta (*Acts* xxvii).

Dr. Campbell's book provides sound suggestive themes for Easter addresses by hard-pressed clergymen. They would do well, however, to hesitate before adopting Dr. Campbell's dating of the Gospels—but after all that is not his *métier*. Nevertheless Dr. Torrey, on whom he seems to rely, is an important New Testament critic.

We conclude with one of the many apt citations in which Dr. Campbell's book abounds :

'The expectation of survival is far earlier than the dawn of recorded history. Socrates and Plato raised the expectation to a wholly new level and gave it a reasoned basis and a literary interpretation which surpassed anything before known in the ancient world. But even so it remains essentially true, as an apostolic Christian of the first century believed, that Christ "brought life and immortality to light by His Gospel."' (*Some Problems of Life*, by Rufus M. Jones.)

H.D.A.M.

A RATIONALIST CRITICISM OF ROMANISM

The Roman Catholic Church has had a long history and in his attempt to assess its value and significance Mr. Howell Smith has written a long book. There is much in *Thou art Peter** of interest, and one can admire the author's courage, common sense and insight if one does not always share his conclusions.

The book opens with an examination of the central doctrines of the Catholic Faith. An attempt is made to state these simply but fairly, to trace the history of the development of each doctrine, and where divergent views were held to outline the varying opinions with appropriate citations from the relevant authorities. When this has been done the author endeavours to subject the structure he has raised to a close cannonade from the angle of a modern, critical and rationalist standpoint. In so doing he reveals many weaknesses in the Catholic defences, though he is fair-minded enough to admit that there was at least something in the citadel worth defending. While Mr. Howell Smith cannot accept all the implications of Catholic theism, neither can he advocate a thorough-going atheism. He writes (p. 32) :

'Theism, in the traditional meaning of the term, breaks down on a critical examination. Neither the metaphysics of being, nor the cosmic order, nor the phenomena of conscience and moral valuations can ground an unchallengeable argument for the existence of God in the sense required for the establishment of the truth of Catholic theology.

'Atheism as a critical rejection of all ideas of deity as unconditioned originator and controller of the world-flux, whose laws science seeks to discover and to apply to the service of mankind, is quite a justifiable attitude for a philosopher to adopt. And yet the mystic may claim to have the last word. The world is many and the world is one. The world is ever changing and the world eternally abides. These two fundamental intuitions cannot be harmonized; but we can escape neither of them. Here we confront the Pantheism of the *Upanishads* and Spinoza. But

* *Thou Art Peter. A History of Roman Catholic Doctrine and Practice*, by A. D. Howell Smith. (Watts & Co., 1950; 21/-.)

we cannot on such a foundation erect liturgies of prayer and praise. No Father in Heaven smiles down on us. There remain the mystery and the awfulness and the splendour of the starry realm that forms the wizard background of "our little life," which is "rounded with a sleep."

In a chapter entitled 'The Trinity and the Incarnation' Mr. Howell Smith sketches the history of the various Christological controversies and the rise and fall of the principal heresies in the early Church. Of Chalcedon he writes :

'What then is the faith of Chalcedon? Advised by Leo, the first theologian of any standing among the Bishops of Rome, the Fathers of the Council gave Jesus a single personality, in which two natures, one human and the other divine, were perfectly united but in no way fused. It is doubtful whether the average believer, however orthodox he may think he is, understands to what he is committed. Jesus is either thought of as a very good man, who was virginally born, worked miracles, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, and may well be called the Son of God. Or else he is regarded as God walking about the earth in the guise of man. Popular orthodoxy veers either towards an incoherent Unitarianism or towards an incoherent monophysitism.' (p. 44.)

Mr. Howell Smith ought to sit at the feet of a competent theologian like Hastings Rashdall or Dean Inge to discover the right interpretation of the Chalcedonian Christology.

Mr. Howell Smith describes the main theories of the Atonement that have been held by leading Catholic theologians. He shows how the earlier crude view gave way to that of Anselm, which was in turn superseded by that of Abelard. Nevertheless, it was really the teaching of Anselm which triumphed at the Council of Trent, though Mr. Howell Smith believes that in course of time even Catholic doctrine shows signs of evolution. His chapter on 'The Atonement' ends with the words :

'The Revolution attempted by the Modernists has so far failed. But Catholic dogma will slowly change, for it has changed before. The faithful will not be aware of the change. As the ransom theory has passed into oblivion, the same fate will overtake the theory of Anselm and its variants. By subtle reinterpretations, not by point-blank repudiation, will the revolution be effected, so that after the lapse of centuries the faithful will have forgotten what their fathers taught and continue fervently to boast that they believe only what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all.' (p. 67.)

There is an interesting chapter on 'The Seven Sacraments.' The gradual displacement of adult by infant baptism is traced, and attention is drawn to the practice of giving Communion to newly-baptized infants, which continued until the eighth century. Mr. Howell Smith attributes the final victory of infant baptism to the triumph in the West of the Augustinian view that all children who died unbaptized went undeniably to hell.

When he comes to the Mass, 'the greatest of the Catholic sacraments and the central rite of the Catholic cult,' the author has little difficulty in showing the disparity which exists between the practice of the primitive Church and the elaborate ritual and ingenious eucharistic teaching of the Middle Ages.

Throughout this book a valuable work has been done in showing how much at variance are the beliefs of an orthodox Catholic with those of an ordinary, intelligent person who has the benefit of an education in which both the humanities and the sciences have played a part. In Shaw's *Candida*,

Burgess, the unscrupulous employer, is made to remark that opinions (which normally are of small account) 'become very serious things when people take to acting on them.' If Catholics like to believe that every man has his angel and his devil, that the priest works a miracle every time he says the Mass, that he knows the geographical peculiarities of the underworld and the exact order of precedence among the archangels and cherubim, that is of comparatively small moment. What is serious is when the Catholic begins to act on his strange beliefs. This becomes of vast social importance when we begin to discuss the so-called sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

Mr. Howell Smith rightly stresses the enormous change in the whole social situation from that existing when Jesus taught. He writes:

'The legislation of Jesus was for a simpler social order. He could have had no conception of our elaborate and intricate civilization, with its solicitors and barristers, its decrees nisi and decrees absolute, its rulings about domicile, nullity and nullifiability. He never contemplated, surely, the deserted mother of tender babes, unable to find a legal protector for them and her, the young girl heartlessly abandoned at the church door, the youth cheated in the full vigour of his sexual powers by the "gold-digger," who had ogled him into a farcical union, the sane spouse chained up by priest or registrar to a lunatic, or the victim of sadistic lust.' (p. 379.)

The Catholic recognizes no such change. The teaching of Jesus, as interpreted by the Church, is eternally valid. Therefore the subject of divorce is a closed issue. The use of contraceptives is regarded as a mortal sin, and excessive child bearing which frequently occurs in consequence, often causing the death of the mother, is callously disregarded. Catholic doctors are instructed that during child-birth the life of the mother must always be sacrificed if there is any possibility of saving the child. This was the attitude adopted by Soames in *The Forsyte Saga* and most humane men to-day find it difficult to understand such a position. It is in matters such as these that Catholicism stands most severely condemned, rather than in its theological absurdities and superstitious practice. In drawing attention to this practical side of the religious problem Mr. Howell Smith will earn the gratitude at least of Englishmen.

Did Jesus bestow special powers upon Peter? And did Peter transfer the authority he derived from Jesus to the See of Rome? This is discussed at length in the chapter called 'The Evolution of the Papacy.' It is indeed true that both the power and the pretensions of the Popes evolved. The attempt to read back the exalted claims of later days into the simpler circumstances of sub-apostolic times must always fail. The greater the pretension, as in the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, the more obvious the failure.

In his final chapter, 'The Church in Retrospect and Prospect,' the author draws his conclusions. He displays an intense belief in civilization, a belief almost as naïve as that shown by the Catholic for Papalism. The driving force behind this excellent thing called civilization is reason, though the author remarks a trifle wistfully, 'one may well doubt whether men will ever be wholly rational.' (p. 805.) He states that 'the Church was only one of the factors in the making of European civilization,' but since it was one of the factors it has much to commend it after all. His statement that 'Christianity did not introduce a new ethic into the world' (p. 772), because parallels can be found in pre-Christian teaching to individual items in the Sermon on the Mount, underestimates the moral force and urgency which was the really novel feature of the preachers of the Gospel. Of the future Mr. Howell Smith speaks with confidence. 'The Church will pass, for she has not

received from heaven the gift of immortality.' (p. 805.) Presumably civilization will succeed Catholicism, but as to times and seasons the author is silent. The ultimate demise of the Church, like the *Parousia*, will occur, but it may be indefinitely delayed.

Altogether this is a useful, instructive and interesting volume. It is written without malice or undue bias, though from an extreme point of view. There are many shrewd hits, some entertaining passages, and many well-constructed arguments. Yet as one ends the volume, we who are neither Papal Catholics nor scientific agnostics feel compelled to adhere to a *tertium quid* which is rational and Christian, scientific and spiritual.

GEOFFREY PARRISH

PROMETHEAN MAN*

Mr. Honey, an expert on the ceramic art of China and on English pottery and porcelain, fails to find in the world of Nature that harmony which in a Chinese vase appeals to the eye and the imagination.

T. H. Huxley in a famous Romanes Lecture declared that it was Man's business to defy the cosmic process. Mr. Honey's thesis is the same. Whether Man is the victim of a personal Demiurge or an impersonal Force, he must 'pit his humanity against the brutality of the natural world, and set his kindness against its cruelty.' Closely regarded, he finds Nature to be 'a tissue of mutual conflict, rivalry and destruction, remorseless and unrelenting.' As Huxley said, Nature's way is not a word and a blow, but a blow—and a fatal one—without warning.

And if there is ruthlessness in Nature, Man does not lag far behind, and man's inhumanity to man is just his share in the universal struggle for existence. With a part of himself, he seems to participate in the cruelty and savagery of Nature. And yet, with another part of himself, he revolts against this cruelty in Nature, and also against that taint of cruelty in himself. Man, as Pascal declared, is a paradox, a creature of contradictions, divided against himself.

It is, of course, strange that Nature should somehow have given birth to this child who repudiates its parent, having within it something, as it would appear, not derived from that parent's loins. And yet where else could it have come from? Mr. Honey cannot tell us; all he can say is that it is *there*—this ethical imperative peculiar to Man.

'It belongs to an impulse of pity and compassion which could not have sprung directly from the universal natural conflict, since it is an impulse that would hinder, not help, the individual in his struggle for self-preservation.'

Pity and compassion are utterly disinterested; they seek no personal advantage. Nature's struggle for existence cannot admit them. The presence of this peculiar altruistic instinct in the human breast has been accounted for in two ways. The theologians attribute it to a divine revelation, the scientists to some tendency innate in Nature herself and emergent in Man. Mr. Honey can accept neither explanation. He speaks of this 'tremendous rejection of the whole natural process' as being 'based on mystical intuition of the profoundest kind,' and he would describe it under the figure of 'a growth and flowering by which something entirely new came into the world.'

'Of the origin of brotherly love and Christian Charity nothing can be affirmed, in spite of the name. No explanation can be offered; to say

* *Nature, God and Man*, by W. B. Honey. (Pen-in-Hand, Oxford. 4/6.)

that they have grown is to explain nothing. It is sufficient to recognise the fact of their existence; whether or not they proceed from a source external to man is immaterial to that fact. And just as an author of the evil natural process must demand our hostility and defiance whether it be a god or an impersonal force, so also the gentle power that opposes it demands our fidelity; and if there were a personal Christ from whom all kindness and Charity proceeded, it would be our duty to love and serve him.'

This 'rejection of the whole natural process' and the 'mystical intuition' from which it springs, could these things form the basis for a religion, and serve as an inspiration for the more humane elements in our modern society, and for men of good-will generally? Mr. Honey thinks so.

'Now the church of Christ,' he writes, 'would appear to have been founded upon the teaching of a man who had deeply felt the iniquity of the created world and proposed a new morality in defiance of its laws. Upon the mystical basis of that teaching a church could have been founded which would have been the symbol and representative of the new conscience of mankind. But as far as we can tell that seems not to have happened.'

And again he says,

'Of that discovery and enlightenment, that flowering of the human spirit, the name Christ might have been the symbol, and the Christian Church a rallying point.'

In that case it might have become 'the inspiration and fountain-head of all man's efforts to create in the light of Christian Charity a new and more humane social order.'

Of course, one cannot tell. A church is formed of human beings and necessarily partakes in full measure of human limitations, mental and moral. That it ought not to be so may be admitted, but that it *is* so history makes evident. That the Church involved itself in certain beliefs which Mr. Honey, and many people of intelligence and good-will, cannot accept, is true enough too.

But has not the Christian Church, in its own way, taken much the same line as T. H. Huxley and Mr. Honey? It is true that the Church repudiated Manicheism early in its history, and regarded the created world as 'very good.' The Psalmist declares that 'the heavens declare the glory of God,' and the majesty and wonder of creation are the theme of some of the finest Hebrew poetry. For Jesus the flowers were arrayed more gloriously than Solomon. And yet these writers were no sentimentalists; they pictured the lion as going roaring after its prey. But they recognised that the battle is not so much between Man and Nature lying *outside* himself, save in so far as he had to replenish the earth and subdue it, but with Nature *inside* himself—i.e. with that part of his own nature which St. Paul calls 'the natural man' or 'the Old Adam.' To declare war against the cruelty and inhumanity of Nature until nature within is subdued is to indulge in moral indignation which leads nowhere and is really a form of self-indulgence. This is just where so many of our idealists and utopians go astray. They fail to realise that they cannot bring about the Kingdom of heaven on earth, until it is first established within themselves. No man can give what he has not got.

Our criticism of Mr. Honey's sincere and outspoken book would be that he tends to picture Man as an undaunted hero doing battle with a hostile world of Nature which recognises none of his ideals. He will probably be

defeated in the end, but will go down fighting. Prometheus defies Zeus, the creator of an evil universe.

Some truth of course there is in this, and Man should recognise that he stands above Nature, that he is Nature's end-product. But though he judges Nature and condemns her by his own standards, nevertheless he should never forget that this Nature which he condemns is still part of himself. And it is *there* that he must fight Nature. Here lies the crux and the heart of the combat, and to be defeated here is to be defeated all along the line.

To do the Christian Church justice, it has always taught this, nor is it likely that the lesson will ever cease to need to be taught — and learned, often painfully, by mankind.

J.C.H.

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, 1549-1661

A most attractive and original *brochure* on our English Prayer Book has been produced by our foremost Anglican liturgiologist, Professor Ratcliff of Cambridge.* It consists of eighty liturgical illustrations reproduced from pre-Reformation Service Books and from successive editions of the English Prayer Book. Plate 1 reproduces the title-page of the 'Winter Part' of the *Portifory*, or Breviary, printed in 1544:

'This Breviary, of which the first edition was issued by Whitchurch in 1541, is described in its title as 'purged from very many faults'; it omits all reference to the Pope, as ordered by King Henry VIII in 1534, "together with other matters repugnant to the most Christian ordinances of our King," e.g. the feasts of St. Thomas of Canterbury, observances of which had been abolished in 1536.'

Plate 5 is particularly interesting. It is

'The title-page of the *Sarum Missal* printed in London by John Day in 1557, the last year but one of the reign of Queen Mary, whose coat of arms and initials are here displayed. This was the last Latin Missal to be printed for use in the Church of England.'

Plates 8 and 9 are

'Two pages from the *Sarum Processional* printed in Paris by Nicholas Prevost, and dated December 30th, 1530. These pages prescribe a rite and ceremonies peculiar to Easter Day. Before daylight, or at least before Mattins, on Easter morning, a procession was formed at the "Easter Sepulchre," and the Host and Cross which had been placed in the Sepulchre on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday respectively were taken out. The Cross was then carried in procession, during which the choir sang the Easter Anthem, "Christ rising from the dead," etc.; after a collect, the Cross was venerated, the pyx containing the Host was suspended again in the usual place, the Lenten coverings were removed from all crosses, pictures, and statues in the church, and the bells were rung for Mattins. The first Prayer Book of 1549 retained some part of this usage (see Plate 23). The woodcut in the top left-hand corner of Plate 9 indicates the arrangement of the procession.'

This answers the question often put by visitors to ancient churches when an 'Easter Sepulchre' is pointed out to them by their guide: What was it used for?

* *The Book of Common Prayer: its Making and Revisions, 1549-1661*, by Edward C. Ratcliff, Ely Professor of Divinity. (S.P.C.K.; 1949. 10/-.)

Professor Ratcliff's book answers a host of other questions dealing with English Public Worship from the days of Pope Gregory the Great down to and including the period of our Stuart Monarchs. The answers to these questions are needful not only for the understanding of the past, but are helps to the framing of a sound policy in our present state of liturgical conflict and confusion.

V.M.B.

CHRISTIAN ORIGINS IN THE WEST

In *The Beginnings of Western Christendom** Dr. Elliott-Binns has given us a clear and comprehensive account of the rise of Christianity in the West. The value of the book lies precisely in the fact that it views the subject of Christian origins from a given geographical aspect. There is much to be said for this method of studying the history of 'the undivided Church.' It is indeed indispensable to a properly balanced view of the whole, for the differences in thought and outlook which existed in the great churches from the earliest times are manifest. Yet there are very few books which assist this localized study of early Church history—one on the Church of Antioch is a particularly crying need—and therefore there is the more reason to be grateful for Dr. Elliott-Binns's contribution. How many books, for example, have treated Western Christendom in a general fashion since Milman's *History of Latin Christianity* was published nearly a century ago? But during that century a great deal of research has been devoted to the subject and this Dr. Elliott-Binns summarises in a clear and judicious manner.

Obviously a work of this kind will not be in the main an expression of original thought, and the publisher's blurb on the dust cover merely makes nonsense when it claims that 'in the use of the "apocryphal" New Testament, Dr. Elliott-Binns's history breaks new ground.' There is nothing new in the use of the Apocryphal New Testament which in any case here forms the subject of one section only of a brief chapter, and it cannot be said that new ground is broken by any rearrangement of one's material. But such foolish attempts to demonstrate the originality of the book are superfluous; its value lies elsewhere, particularly, as the publisher more properly claims, in shewing 'that Western Christendom had distinctive features from the beginning.'

Nevertheless one cannot help wishing that so learned an historian as Dr. Elliott-Binns had given more space to controverted issues and expressed his own views more fully upon them. Thus one turns eagerly to the chapter entitled 'The Church and its Ministry,' to see what he has to say on these matters. But on the vexed question of the origins of the ministry there is a summary of Harnack's theory of a charismatic ministry, the only comment upon it being that it 'is probably too rigid' (p. 314) and there is a reference to Lightfoot's equation of bishops with presbyters which 'probably goes too far' (p. 317), and that is about all. That latest red herring of the Anglo Catholics, the *Shaliach*, is not even mentioned. We are told that 'according to *Mark* iii, 15 the title "apostle" was actually given by the Lord' (p. 314), though it is very doubtful whether the words 'whom He also called apostles' are part of the true text of St. Mark. They are omitted by the Sinaitic and Vatican Codices and were placed in the margin by the editors of the Revised Version, but not even in a footnote is their doubtfulness here referred to.

Again, on the subject of Baptism and the Eucharist, we find that out of 400 pages, less than three are devoted to the former, and less than six to the

* *The Beginnings of Western Christendom*, by L. E. Elliott-Binns, D.D. (Lutterworth Press, 1948. 25/-.)

latter, which is surely inadequate. And once more, in the final chapter on the puzzling subject of persecution one hoped that a little new light might be thrown upon it. Why was it that some of the best Emperors, as well as some of the worst proved such enemies of the Church? Obviously it was in fact the case that 'the most serious offence of which Christians were guilty was abstinence from participation in the official cultus' (p. 380), but why such abstinence was so serious in the eyes of a tolerant people like the Romans who in any case usually allowed it to the Jews no one seems satisfactorily to have explained. Dr. Elliott-Binns goes on to suggest that as a further reason, 'the anarchical and disorderly elements in the primitive Church were probably much more considerable than later ages recognised or cared to remember; but then he continues, 'it is not suggested that they formed any really appreciable portion of the new society; Christians probably came chiefly from the small shopkeepers and artisans, a type usually averse to social unsettlement.' (p. 381).

It is true, of course, that reinterpretation and the propounding of new and tentative ideas is always a risky business. If widely accepted, the book containing them may become a classic, but if not it is liable soon to be forgotten. Dr. Elliott-Binns has chosen a safer course and the result is a book of straightforward and substantial value. But had it possessed a little more of the imaginative qualities of, say, Streeter's *Primitive Church*, its interest certainly, and its real value most probably, would have been more than a little increased.

Towards the end, the set-up of the book has gone badly askew, on pages 370-1, 374-5, and 382-3.

D. L. SCOTT

RECENT DISCUSSIONS ON CHRISTIAN BAPTISM *

Since the days of the famous conflict about Christian Baptism between Henry Philpot, Bishop of Exeter, and Mr. Gorham, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, settled by the profound judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Causes Ecclesiastical, Baptism has occupied a very subordinate position compared with the Lord's Supper in the sphere of ecclesiastical controversy in the Church of England. But it has now come to the fore, not primarily theologically but practically. 'There is a church problem: something needs doing.' This was evident from the following painful statistics published in the Church Assembly Report entitled *Baptism To-day*:

'Out of every 100 children born, 67 are baptized at fonts of the Church of England, 26 are subsequently confirmed, but only 9 remain faithful even to the extent of making their Communion once a year at Easter.' (p. 8.)

As a result of general discussion in clerical assemblies it would appear that the situation would not be remedied by any alteration in the present sequence of Baptism, Confirmation and admission to Holy Communion.

* *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, by W. F. Flemington, M.A. (S.P.C.K. 10/6. 1948.)

Baptism to-day (Report of the Convocations of Canterbury and York, pub.; Church Assembly, 1/6. 1949.)

'Baptism in the Church,' Prof. T. W. Manson. (*Scottish Journal of Theology*, December, 1949. 3/6.) (His article contains a most valuable bibliography on Modern Baptismal Studies.)

'Some Important Issues for Baptismal Theology,' Rev. R. E. White, B.D. (*Expositor* Times, January, 1950.)

Confirmation To-day. (Published by Church Assembly, 1944. 2/-.)

It is impossible here to attempt a summary of the arguments : some would seek the remedy by a return to New Testament practice ; others by imitating the Church of Rome. In the end the practical reformers were united in condemning the 'indiscriminate baptism of infants' as the main cause of the present alarming situation. They felt there was a great need for 'tightening up'—a 'tightening up' which in some cases would send parishioners off to have their infants baptized by the nearest dissenting minister, and in other cases lead to the infants not being baptized at all. The evils threatened by 'tightening up' must seem to many experienced parish priests far greater than the benefits which its advocates promise.

To us it seems that the real remedy must be found in the sphere of more effective Christian education in the home, in the school and in the church. That is a slow process, but it is the only sure remedy and demands much greater exercise of Christian faith, patience, tact and persevering effort than the programme of 'tightening up.' We are compelled also to add that the Christian education remedy will demand, we believe, further revision of our Prayer Book services due to a better understanding to-day of the Anglican doctrine of Infant Baptism. In this connection we commend to our readers Canon F. C. Tindall's appendix ii, pages 38-48, in *Baptism To-day*. We venture here to cite one passage from it :

'Augustine's theory of "original guilt" must be rejected not only as unscriptural and lacking in full catholic authority, but also as irrational and ethically false.' (p. 48.)

May we add two other essential convictions for those who practise infant baptism in the Anglican Communion?

1. That Confirmation is not a separate sacrament but constitutes the proper conclusion of the rite of Christian Baptism. Without Confirmation the rite of Baptism is incomplete.

2. That the practice of infant baptism absolutely demands the practice of Christian education to be carried on as circumstances permit during the whole period between infant baptism and Confirmation.

Without Christian education and without Confirmation the practice of infant baptism cannot be justified.

The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism, by W. F. Flemington, constitutes an admirable text-book for study circles of ordinands and parochial clergy. Professor T. W. Manson writes in his review of Mr. Flemington's book in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* :

'It is natural that one of the main centres of interest should be the sacrament of baptism ; and we have recently had a series of interesting and important publications on this subject. The present article is particularly concerned with one of the best of them, Mr. Flemington's book on the place taken by baptism in the New Testament ; but any adequate account of the situation in the study of the subject must take notice of the work of Oppenheim, Dix, Cullmann, Leenhardt and Barth. It is evident that Mr. Flemington's work makes its appearance in distinguished company ; and it may be said at the outset that it can stand the inevitable comparisons. . . .' (p. 392.)

'Students of the New Testament are much beholden to Mr. Flemington for a scholarly, instructive, and enlightening treatment of his theme.' (p. 403.)

H.D.A.M.

BAPTISMAL EXPERIENCES OF A PARSON

Baptism is coming very much to the fore in church circles. The Pope, the Church Assembly, Dr. Barth, Dr. Muller, and many lesser ecclesiastical authorities have been making pronouncements on it. What I write is no pronouncement but an unconventional record of Baptismal experience by an English parson at home and abroad.

My good vicar, a Tractarian, who prepared me for confirmation taught me the obligation of Infant Baptism. This is proved, said he, by the command of St. Peter on the Day of Pentecost.

'be baptised every one of you . . . for the promise is unto you and to your children.' (*Acts* ii. 38, 39.)

'Unto your *children*—that is *infants*.' That settled it for me.

When I became a curate my first vicar, a devoted disciple of F. D. Maurice, accepted the Maurician principle that the Christian sectarians will be found to be right in what they affirm but wrong in what they deny. 'Hence,' said my vicar, 'I am in agreement with the affirmations of the Baptists but I cannot share their "antipathy to infants".' This conclusion seemed to me to be entirely Christian in the light of Christ's saying: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of God.'

In my first benefice, a small New Zealand town, I was summoned on a Good Friday afternoon to christen a sick infant. In the drawing room there was a large family gathering and the grandmother said: 'Vicar, I am so glad you have come promptly. The child is very ill and our doctor seems unable to do anything further for her. I have told my daughter that the only way to have the child cured is to have her christened.' I said: 'If we are all ready, I will begin the service.' The sick child recovered as has been my experience on many other occasions. At such Baptisms I always offer up prayer for the recovery of the sick child.

In my New Zealand country parishes where Roman priests were few and far between I often baptised the children of Roman Catholics. Having on one occasion baptised a family of five children a Roman Catholic parishioner charged me with 'sheep stealing.' I replied: 'You don't understand the Catholic doctrine of baptism. According to it, when I baptise with water and in the name of the Holy Trinity the child is baptised into the Catholic Church, not into any particular denomination. That was all settled in a dispute between Archbishop Cyprian of Carthage and Pope Stephen seventeen centuries ago. According to the papal decision, not only can Catholic laymen and lay women baptise validly but even schismatics can do so validly where they use water and the right words. Therefore Roman Catholic parents are quite right in asking me to baptise their child as there was no Roman Catholic priest available and as Roman Catholics believe that a child dying unbaptised is undoubtedly lost.'

When later I read theology at Oxford in the early years of the twentieth century and came under the influence of our New Testament critics, although my views on the institution of Baptism changed greatly, I did not value the Sacrament less.

If asked for a brief, clear, modern presentation of Baptism and its significance I should refer my enquirer to (1) Dr. Rashdall's Essay published in his *Christus in Ecclesia* 1904 and (2) The Baptismal Catechism by Robertson of Brighton, contained in Stopford Brook's life of him.

Modern Churchmen, for nearly half a century, urged the Church of England authorities to provide an alternative Service for the Baptism of

infants—more simple, practical and Christian than the Prayer Book Service of 1662.

A Modernist clergyman, during this long period of waiting, at last determined to do for himself what the church authorities had not done. He produced a simple, practical, Christian, Baptismal Service and used it in his Parish Church. When he used it for the first time the Mother said: 'I have had five children "done" but this is the first time I ever knew what they was doin'.'

At last, the Deposited book in 1928, provided such an alternative service which although not legalised was a distinct improvement (1) by omitting the terrible opening words of the 1662 service: 'forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin'; (2) by securing a definite promise from parents and god-parents that the child baptised should be brought up as a Christian. But this 1928 revised service lends itself to further revision.

There are five things at least which could be omitted from it with advantage.

1. The reference to the use of water for the mystical washing away of sin in the case of infants who have not committed actual sin: 'Why?' asked Tertullian in his *Treatise on Baptism*, 'does an age which is naturally innocent hasten to the remission of sins?'

2. The forensic fiction enacted by the sponsors taking the Baptismal vows in the name of the infant. Has anyone a moral right to take vows for another person without having received the consent of that person?

3. Demanding specific assent to each clause of the Apostles' Creed. 'All this I steadfastly believe.'

4. Asking the superfluous question: 'Hath this child been already baptised or no?' which suggests that no arrangements have been made beforehand with the minister for the child's Baptism.

5. The melancholy affirmation at the opening of the service: 'seeing that all men are from their birth prone to sin' which conflicts with the spirit of our Lord's welcoming words: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me for of such is the Kingdom of God.'

There is much talk to-day about the 'indiscriminate baptism' of infants and the need for 'tightening up' the practice of infant baptism. What is really needed is not a 'tightening up' of Baptism but a revival and modernisation of Christian education in the home, the school and the church. The existing situation is unfortunately being used by some of the clergy as justifying their right to refuse to christen the child unless its parents are practising Anglicans or will promise (although themselves Dissenters) that the baptised child shall be brought up an Anglican. This is intolerable tyranny on the part of the clergy of the National Church.

What we ought to have at every infant baptism in the Church of England is the promise from at least the infant's father or mother that the child shall be brought up a Christian. Moreover our Baptismal service should contain a very clear and concise statement as to what 'being brought up a Christian' demands from the parents and sponsors.

I ought to add that in my own experience, I really know nothing of 'indiscriminate baptism.' Perhaps this is because I have always tried to be a conscientious parish visitor. Consequently I have no need to ask at the christening: 'Has this child been already baptised or no' because I have already made in the child's home the arrangements for the child's baptism and have had in a number of cases, to press that the child should be brought to be christened. I have always felt that thereby a very real contact was

made between the child and the Christian Church and also a contact made with the parents of the child and that this being so an opportunity was provided for developing this contact as circumstances permitted. I think that the parents can be brought to recognise this, at least later, when the age for the child's going to Sunday School arrives.

I can recall only one case where I was in very serious doubt as to an honest motive prompting the bringing of the child for Baptism. It was the case of a gipsy woman selling rugs, but it turned out to be quite honest when she brought another gipsy woman to have her child also christened.

When I have spoken in criticism of our 1662 Baptismal service I should wish to add that we ought to acknowledge gratefully what a wonderful improvement our 1662 (really 1552) service was on the pre-Reformation Baptismal Service. This I realised when present at a christening in a continental Roman Catholic church. At that service the Latin tongue was used, uttered with extraordinary rapidity and the service included the use of oil, salt, and saliva and the exorcism of the devil from the child. Our Reformers in 1552 purged the English Baptismal Service from these unedifying accretions.

I conclude with a minor but not uninteresting experience: the christian names given in Baptism. I recall christening a child, Record Reign in the last days of Queen Victoria. And just recently I christened a boy, Monty. In such ways do our Baptismal registers reflect our nation's history.

H.D.A.M.

BRAINS TRUST

Question:

'If God is our omnipotent creator, and if also He is perfectly good, it would seem that His creation should be perfectly good; yet in this world there are many things which must be called evil (war, murder, cruelty—to mention only a few). What is the explanation?'

Answer 1:

The difficulty which our correspondent puts before us cannot be better stated than in a well-known passage of Cardinal Newman's *Apologia*:

'To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of men, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken, of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers or truth; the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully and yet exactly described in the apostle's words, "having no hope and without God in the world"—all this is a vision to dizzy and appal, and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.'

This is indeed a difficulty in the way of believing in an all-powerful and perfectly good God which might well stagger us. If we are to attempt an

answer, we should naturally say that we are probably in the early stages of the gradual evolution of God's plan for this world, and if you would judge the worth of a total plan it is seldom possible to judge it in the early stages of its growth.

I remember building a house on a site of considerable natural beauty. The first part of my plan was to play havoc with the peace and beauty of the site, to make an unseemly roadway, to dig holes in the field, to cut down trees, to destroy wild flowers, to chase away the wild creatures which had made their homes there, to put great dumps of brick and timber where up to then had been grass and wild flowers: and — only after months of destruction of beauty and the building up of ugliness could I complete a place worthy to be called a home, and justify the apparent vandalism involved in its growth.

If you have ever seen the body of an animal before birth, you are shocked perhaps at the apparent ugliness and uselessness of the structure, but you know that it is the beginning of something which will ultimately be beautiful.

But, perhaps we say, God ought to be able to produce beauty and goodness without deformity and pain, and frequent failure. We are probably unable to judge of the value of freedom in growth. It is always well, if we want to criticize God's mysterious designs, to try to formulate some alternative pattern by ourselves. We nearly always end by leaving out the awkward and upsetting factor of *freedom*. We would insist on the creation of persons and forces which work with automatic accuracy, as indeed machines ought to do. But what if God does not want machines? What if He sees something higher, beings who can and do achieve perfection by willing and loving goodness, while retaining the power to fall below it?

We know that we ourselves would never be satisfied with being loved by a machine, however perfect; and is it not possible that God sees that failure and suffering, which deeply shock us, are worth while in the process of creating a free and conscious goodness which cannot be created in any other way? But, you may answer, how immeasurably horrible is the suffering involved! It is, I think, easy to think and speak as though the whole universe were full of grief and torment. But great naturalists have noted that if you lie by a hedge or in the grass you do not find the lowly creatures who dwell there appearing to be full of intense misery. On the contrary, their very brief lives would seem, so far as we can judge, to be replete with delight and satisfaction. And with human life, you do not gather that even those to whom the smallest measure of opportunity of happiness has been given, the backward races, as we call them, are on the whole unhappy: they are, indeed, much more prone to laughter and singing than those to whom much greater gifts have been given.

These are facts worthy of being taken into account in considering these mysteries, yet it remains true, I believe, that if we are not able to believe that there is another life beyond this one which we know, for which this life is a preparation, we are 'of all men most pitiable.' To believe that this life is the final word, the conclusion of the whole argument, is, I should feel, to judge that there is no reason for living.

But Christianity, at least, gives us reason to believe that we are, while here, forming organs and undergoing experiences whose meaning we can only dimly guess at, but which will be justified in another life.

If that be so, and I feel sure that it is so, then we can bear the weight, sometimes so oppressive as to reduce us to despair, of the world's miseries, believing that they are producing an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

HAROLD ANSON

Answer 2 :

The question has received many replies but no answer. But as it is reflection that poses the question, *any* answer must be in terms of ordinary reasonableness, though not necessarily in those of abstract rationalism or logic. Dr. F. R. Tennant's handling of it in a chapter in the second volume of *Philosophical Theology* seems to me as satisfactory as any I know because it is all in terms of an empiricism which makes minimal assumptions. I am not sure that I understand the questioner when he says he is concerned rather with the existence of evil than of justifying the ways of God, because it is precisely the *conjoining* of these two aspects of the matter which poses the problem, and otherwise there is none. The bare existence of moral evil or metaphysical evil (that is, imperfection of any sort) is no problem except on an explanation of existence in terms of ethical theism: in a materialist-evolutionary world any number of evils are no problem.

What I feel sure of is that to find any other explanation of moral evil, or cause of it, other than in free-will robs moral evil of its wickedness and religious condemnation; and therefore, like any thorough-going determinism, any such explanation is fatal to ethical theism and therefore to Christianity. How physical evil—the life story of *plasmodium malariae* is a good example, one of hundreds—can be reconciled with the traditional Divine attributes I do not know. Nor can 'the Fall' help us here because it assumes an initial creation of a different character from the only one of which we have any knowledge; that is to start from an entirely unfounded assertion, and consequently anything deduced from it is but the extraction of what is initially assumed.

Tennant, being a consistent empiricist, is not troubled with saving the traditional Divine attributes. He frankly accepts the fact, and the consequences thereof, that the Deity who has wrought by methods which we call evolutionary is the only Deity in whom there can be any grounds for believing; and evolution allows us to regard physical and metaphysical evil as an unavoidable by-product of methods which seem essential to the production of most that we value most highly as good.

Moral evil cannot exist apart from moral persons; nor can the pains of physical evil exist apart from creatures who suffer them. There is therefore value in C. S. Lewis's point that 'evils' cannot be added up like material things. There is no 'more' toothache if ten people have it than if only one has it. Multitudes suffering provide, perhaps, a more psychologically distressing experience than a single pang of useless pain; but just as the one pang is enough to pose the problem, so the maximum of pain the most sensitive creature can suffer is 'all' the pain there is. It is also worth observing that the *Book of Job* and the Cross of Christ are sufficient evidence that Christianity has affirmed the love of God not in ignorance of the dark problem which challenges it but in the teeth of that problem.

J. S. BEZZANT

Answer 3 :

We must begin with definition. What is omnipotence? The power to do everything? Or the power to do everything possible? Aristotle in his metaphysics (citing the poet Agathon) decided for the latter alternative. Aristotle's decision demands a definition of possible. Is it merely physical or does it include the rational, moral and spiritual? If we decide in favour of the larger conception, this involves a definition of goodness and includes the

nature of the universe. Here we go again to Aristotle—a sound evolutionist who affirms that the true nature of a thing is that which it is when its becoming is completed. Obviously, as we stand in the midst of a process and not at its conclusion, we are unable to answer these questions adequately as they involve the origin and nature of the universe. In short, we can provide no theoretically conclusive solution of the Problem of Evil—only hypotheses.

Practically, however, the Christian religion provides an adequate answer by teaching us how to deal with evil in our environment and in ourselves. Like President Coolidge's preacher, we are 'against it' in every form, and where we cannot eliminate it we must restrict it and endure what survives of it. In the sphere of endurance the Christian religion provides inspiring examples and spiritual grace. This brief answer assumes (with Bishop Butler) that for human beings this world is a sphere of education and probation.

H.D.A.M.

Answer 4.

If God is in any real sense our Father, and if 'His nature and His name is love,' His character will condition His creative energy; and this will best be interpreted not as the manufacture of robots but as the bringing into being, and the education, of children: a family will be a truer picture of His world than a chess-board.

If His children are to be free to respond to His love, they must also be free to reject it; and freedom will be a characteristic of the whole process of the evolution of life.

This is in fact what we find—that the unicellular organism differs from the blob of colloid precisely because it has, within however narrow limits, a possibility of alternate response.

Is there any manifestation of evil which cannot be explained as due to the creature's misuse of choice and to the inherited effects of this misuse?

And if God is love, can He overcome this evil except by the way of the Cross—that is, by love and service and suffering?

In my opinion doctrines of Satan or of a pre-mundane Fall do not help at all: they merely raise the same questions in a form in which we have much less data for an answer.

C. E. RAVEN

Answer 5:

The 'explanation'? Thy name is Legion.

The Problem of Evil and its origin, like Peace, is indivisible. No thinking person can separate it from all the basic questions to which an answer is sought by theologies and philosophies. How, then, in a few sentences to give an 'explanation'? As soon expect a tabloid to satisfy hunger.

Obviously, a comprehensive answer to the question would have to elucidate such words as 'omnipotent,' 'creator,' 'perfectly good,' 'evil'—not one of these being unambiguous or self-explanatory. Remember, for example, the small boy's question about God's omnipotence: 'Could God, daddy, make a stone so big that He could not lift it?' Remember, also, how the Pharisees regarded as 'good' what Jesus regarded as 'evil': how many people still regard pain as an 'evil' ('When pain ends, gain ends too'): how often the loss of money is regarded as an 'evil,' and the gain of a fortune a 'good' (in spite of all the teaching of history): how 'death' is frequently equated with 'the last enemy,' and so seldom 'the loving friend': how a celestial collision

may have occasioned our planet and all that dwells thereon, and all the questions men subsequently ask, and all the problems they are led to confront.

So I have no neat and tight 'explanation' of 'evil,' as I have no rationalistically-cogent 'explanation' of 'God.' Let us learn to smile a little at our 'explanations.' 'He sees not clearest who sees all things clear.' 'We see in a glass, darkly.' I distrust all 'final systems' of man's thought, though I cannot but seek one. But my Faith encloses my search, and is not engulfed by it. 'Nothing worthy proving can be proved, nor yet disproven.'

The Theistic hypothesis is the credal basis of Hebraic and Christian Faith. All that our speculation can say is that this is the *least inadequate* of all hypotheses. An advance, surely, upon its two most potent and persisting rivals: the first, Dualism (the doctrine that the universe was created and is preserved by the concurrence of two principles, equally necessary, eternal and independent); the second, Neutral or Non-Moral Life-Force—the strange hypothesis of an unthinking mother who has brought forth thinking children, and of an unmoral father who has begotten sacrificing sons.

But this Biblical theistic hypothesis is not pathological speculation. It arose out of the truthful confrontation of the universe and the moral response to it. It neither strangles man's quest nor slays his endeavour. His quest is to 'understand' and to 'explain': his endeavour is to battle and to overcome.

If by a universe 'perfectly good' is meant a universe *without* pain and sorrow; without diversity of being, function and gift; without moral choice, adventurous thought and spiritual aspiration—a universe *with* all the evils these absences would involve—I confess to a preference for the universe we know and have. Here we must follow on to know, seek to find, strive to win, lose to gain, die to live. I myself cannot conceive or imagine a better: and so have never regretted, with Alphonso of Castille, my absence at the creation when such excellent advice might have been given to the Creator.

C. J. WRIGHT

St. Augustine's College, Canterbury.

Editor's Comment:

It has been said that the existence of evil is the Achilles heel of theism. Moral evil can doubtless be explained in terms of the gift of free will, but I do not see how such diseases as cancer and tuberculosis, or such diabolic ingenuities as the life-history of the malaria mosquito, can be regarded as other than evils, at any rate from the point of view of the human beings who have been and are their victims.

Of course, what we assume is that the human point of view is the one which counts; the malaria mosquito sees things differently. The situation seems to be that we living creatures live by devouring one another. Recently I saw a weasel pounce upon a field mouse, kill it and carry it off in triumph. The weasel's good was in this case the mouse's evil. How does the Creator view it?

Someone, I think Sir Richard Livingstone, has pointed out how differently the Greeks and the Hebrews viewed the problem. Prometheus defied the Deity to his face. The Jew recognised that such an attitude was religiously abhorrent and rationally mistaken.

It seems to me that the religious consciousness makes certain affirmations which cannot be made good if you confine your view to the obvious and the logical. Nothing is easier than for the rationalist to make hay of those affirmations. And yet he does not really convince, because there is more to it than he imagines.

J. C. HARDWICK

CORRESPONDENCE

THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

SIR,

As one who has been associated with the Society for Psychical Research for over sixty years I should like to reply briefly to Mr. Hardwick's letter.

The basis of the widespread attacks on Christianity and on all religion is that our knowledge of the universe is derived from our five bodily sensations only and that our spiritual experiences, therefore, are all derived by our imaginations from these. The proof of telepathy disproves this.

It is the scientific study of the physical world, and especially of what were at the time its 'abnormal' phenomena, which has enabled us to achieve results beyond our wildest dreams. So the study of human personality, including its abnormal phenomena, may, we hope, lead to knowledge which will enable us to produce spiritual results which two thousand years of teaching and example has only effected to a limited extent.

To say a scientific proof of survival would have no religious value is not St. Paul's view, as after giving what for him was a scientific proof of the survival of Jesus, and hence of men, he says that if the dead do not rise 'we are of all men the most miserable.' The idea of a loving God is bound up with the idea of survival. If this life is to be the end, and not the training for a future one, the evils, injustices and tragedies of life are incompatible with the Christian idea of God. And if the studies of psychical researchers should lead to a clear proof of survival, it would have a widespread effect on religion.

J. HUME-ROTHERY

SIR,

In his criticism of the Conference paper on 'The Occult and the Psychic' the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, while acknowledging that the Old Testament supplies plenty of evidence of the practice of divination and the use of abnormal and occult powers, quotes a passage of Scripture (*Isaiah* viii, 19) that, taken by itself, would seem to justify his plea that such practices should be considered as belonging primarily to a stage of human evolution which can only be regarded as primitive. There are, however, other passages in the Scriptures, notably *I Sam.* xxviii, 6-25, and *I Cor.* xii, 7-11, that shed a flood of light upon the subject and are capable of a wider and more liberal interpretation.

The woman of Endor is not described as a witch in the text of the Bible; she was, in fact, a gifted and generous woman. A fine tribute is paid to her by Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book VI, ch. xiv, sect. 4, wherein he commends her generosity towards Saul in aiding him, although knowing she and her sort had been suppressed by the king.

The all too prevalent idea that Scripture is at deadly variance with any attempt to communicate with the spiritual world and its inhabitants is not only erroneous but quite unwarranted. It has grown out of a most mistaken habit of confusing ordinary spirit communion with those horrible necromantic practices—black magic and devil worship—literally presided over by 'witches,' which are degrading and revolting in the extreme—practices still followed to-day all over the world to an extent that is hardly realized, but with which genuine communion has never had the least relationship. These are the pagan practices we find so condemned in *Leviticus* and *Deuteronomy*—the perversions and desecrations of faculties that should be rightly used instead of being prostituted.

'I am come,' Christ declared, 'that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.' We are moving toward that more abundant life here and now. Physics and psychics are twin brothers, making it easier for a physicist to understand psychics than scientists in other branches of knowledge. Hence the whole tendency of physical science to-day is towards the view that not physical but etheric matter is the basic structure of the universe.

Until one clearly understands that our senses here only respond to a very limited range of vibrations in what we term physical matter, that outside these there is a universe full of life which responds to a higher range of vibration, unreal to us, but more real to it than physical matter, one cannot grasp or understand in all its fullness the psychical phenomena which develop through mediumship.

I would conclude by saying: 'Add to your Faith Knowledge, Ignorance is the curse of God'; and, in more joyful vein, supplement it in the words of Shakespeare: 'Knowledge is the wing whereon we fly to Heaven.'

H. WM. BRITTAN

46 Howard Road, Blaby, Leicester.

January 14th, 1950.

SIR,

I agree with Mr. Hume-Rothery that widespread attacks on our religion are based on the assumption that our knowledge of the universe is derived from *data* supplied by our five bodily senses. The view, however, is not a tenable one; for the knowledge supplied by those senses is of a very limited kind, and apart from our reasoning faculties and our categories of thought would tell us little about the universe as a whole. Animals and insects in some cases have keener senses than we, with a more extended range, but their knowledge of the universe is far more limited than ours.

Other senses than the bodily ones, *e.g.* a telepathic sense, might supply us with knowledge about the universe which the bodily senses cannot supply. But this knowledge would not necessarily be of more religious significance or value than knowledge derived from the bodily senses. Knowledge about the psychic realm is in itself no more 'religious' than knowledge about the physical realm. Whether it is religious or not depends entirely upon the mental and moral make-up of the person possessing the knowledge. To suppose that 'psychic' knowledge is of itself of religious significance is a superstition.

As your correspondent remarks, the scientific study of the physical world has enabled us to achieve results 'beyond our wildest dreams,' *inter alia* the atomic bomb. Nor need one doubt that the scientific study of the psychical world would enable us to do likewise, and to produce results even more horrible. Means would become available to bewitch people, to undermine their sanity, to enable them to believe lies, to make good seem evil and evil good. The most diabolic perversion of human nature would become possible—even easy. What religious value would there be in this?

St. Paul did indeed believe in life after death, but his belief had religious significance and value because of the *quality* he attributed to that life in which he believed: 'It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.' Those who were 'raised with Christ' would have their portion in the Messianic Kingdom, and not to share in this would be a miserable fate.

It is indeed true that 'the idea of a loving God is bound up with the idea of survival,' and to believe in survival *because* you believe in a loving God is a *religious* belief. But this is a very different thing from believing in survival

because of evidence supplied by abnormal phenomena. Such a belief seems to me to have no religious value whatever. Clear proof of such survival might have a 'widespread effect upon religion'; but it would, more likely than not, be a pernicious effect, and push us back amid the superstitions denounced by the Hebrew prophets.

With regard to Mr. Brittan's remarks, in *I Cor.* xii, 7-11 'the Spirit' would seem to be the Spirit of Christ which St. Paul believed to be the source of the various powers and capacities he mentions.

As for the woman of Endor, Josephus' favourable view of her does not seem to be of much importance, as he was no more acquainted with her personally than Mr. Brittan or myself. If she was worth her salt as a diviner, as she apparently was, she would see through Saul's disguise easily enough as soon as he crossed the threshold, if not before.

If 'to communicate with the spiritual world' means to say your prayers, Scripture has nothing to say against that. Juggling with mediums is another matter. Mr. Brittan does not say what he means by 'ordinary spirit communion,' so one cannot know whether or not it has any connection with 'horrible necromantic practices.'

The words 'I came that they might have life' do not seem to me to have any bearing on the matter at issue.

I do not think that any physicist of standing could be found to agree that 'physics and psychics are twin brothers,' for the one is a science while the other is not. And it would seem that Mr. Brittan falls into the common error of thinking that modern physical theories of the constitution of matter have anything more 'spiritual' about them than had the theories of Dalton or Epicurus. An electron, or whatever the basic entity may be, is no more, and no less, 'spiritual' than the old-fashioned atom or molecule.

As for the saying 'Knowledge the wings whereby we fly to heaven,' it may equally well carry us in the opposite direction.

J. C. HARDWICK

THE ROAD TO ENDOR

SIR,

Without wishing in any way to start a controversy on psychic matters in your columns, I cannot allow the letter from Mr. Hardwick, whose contributions we all so much value, to go unanswered.

He rightly says that 'precognition, telepathy, etc., extend our knowledge of nature'—yes but surely of 'supernature' also. Indeed one of the first results of this study is to learn that no clear line can be drawn between natural and supernatural. If we accept any of the evidence for survival, and any of the communications from the 'other side' purporting to come from deceased communicators as valid, then surely we have widened the horizons of our human experience as much as they were widened by the telescope and the microscope; and I think Mr. Hardwick would find it difficult to deny that our whole view of man's place in the universe, his religious outlook, has been profoundly altered by the two latter new methods of perception. The whole point of 'spiritualism' as a religion is that not merely does it claim on the evidence to prove survival as a scientific fact, but also to tell us something about the 'source, purpose and quality' of that survival. In spite of the considerable diversity of descriptions of the hereafter, due perhaps to the very diverse qualities of the communicators and their vehicles, there is, in my opinion, a sort of underlying unity among them which provides us with an eschatological picture far different from that of traditional catholic Christianity with its hell, purgatory (?) and heaven.

Further it is just NOT TRUE to say that psychic revelations tell us nothing about the quality of that existence. What they do tell us, far from according with Dean Inge's observations, does a very great deal to remove from death its traditional terrors. The 'spiritualist' picture is neither amoral nor ethical; it contains the Christian elements of judgment (reduced indeed from its traditional sadistic hopelessness to be the sphere of paternal redemptive love, with the possibility of progress) and of final blessedness. Their description of the light and glory of the 'many mansions' of progress and increasing illumination and at-one-ment with God, leave nothing to be desired by the Christian eschatologist, even when they remind him how difficult it is to find human words to express an unutterable beauty of existence.

I wish Mr. Hardwick had heard Archdeacon Marriott's wonderful sermon on the 'many mansions' in Westminster Abbey last Low Sunday, and that he would re-read the last two chapters of Dr. Tyrrell's *Pelican*, which deal completely with his point, or some of the more reputable psychic literature such as Stainton Moses, or Drayton Thomas's *Life Beyond Death with evidence*.

'The 'sensitive' may well be allowed to have, as well as the mystic, his way whereby he may 'into glory peep' and which is the more excellent way, it is not for me to say.

JOHN D. PEARCE HIGGINS

I don't agree with Mr. Tindal Hart's view of Shakespeare. I wonder if he has ever read an extremely interesting book (psychic) *Talks with the Elizabethans*, by Percy Allen, wherein he will learn a lot about Shakespeare's real views on survival, and a lot more also, ably documented with chapter and verse.

J.D.P.H.

Hanley Castle, Vicarage, Worcester.
February 1st, 1950.

MR. HARDWICK'S REPLY

SIR,

In reply to Mr. Pearce-Higgins's observations, I would say that the microscope and the telescope extend the range of a visual sense which we already possess and trust. The results of 'psychic perception' do not seem to me at all on the same level of certainty since they do proceed from a source of the same degree of trustworthiness. Thus they do not reliably extend our view of nature—save in so far as they increase our knowledge of our sub-conscious mental processes. That they do this I am quite prepared to admit.

One must take Mr. Pearce-Higgins's word for it that these 'psychic revelations' do give us information about the quality of existence hereafter. If they do appear to contain, as he says, 'Christian elements,' I should attribute the presence of those elements to the Christian mental background of those who receive the 'revelations.' I would expect to find that Buddhists or Hindus receiving them would give a different account of them. The sub-conscious mind would appear to act as a sort of light-filter; and the rays it lets through vary in accordance with that mind's make-up. Some of the 'revelations' of popular Spiritualism seem to reflect the sentimentality and muddleheaded bewilderment of the popular mind.

J.C.H.

RE-INCARNATION

SIR,

I feel that N. S. Power shows by his letters that he has not studied the theory of *Karma* and Reincarnation before criticising it. The 'wealthy Malay' who refused help to the needy forgot that he was sowing the seeds of his own *Karma* which he will reap in tears. To say that 'there is no continuity in this theory save that of guilt' is astonishingly false. It is the only logical explanation of genius and one can safely and thankfully say that there are few lives entirely without their moments of happiness! There are good *Karmas* as well as bad.

Most lives seem a mixture of both, some are radiantly happy, in spite of 'Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips.' A serene outlook on life may be as much a part of *Karma* as is the 'Sense of Guilt,' and the doctrine of original sin belongs to the orthodox church. 'Reincarnationists' are not responsible for it. As for a future decline in population, we believe that there are many planes of spiritual evolution besides this one small planet.

S. BRAY

The Mill House, Newark, Ripley, Surrey.

SIR,

One of the objections to the idea of reincarnation adduced by the Rev. N. S. Power in his letter published in your September issue is that it 'implies a very unimaginative God to suggest that He can devise no better way of offering salvation to those who had no chance of becoming Christians in this world than to put them back again into this world.'

I am a deeply interested but agnostic reader of *The Modern Churchman*, and I find myself repelled and antagonised in every fibre by the claim of some Christians that the Christian religion possesses an exclusive monopoly of truth and offers the only way to 'salvation.' I do not know whether there is any theological ground for this complacent and arrogant form of egoism (the next stage before and the justification of persecution); but is it possible that any conception could be more alien to the spirit of Christ's teaching?

As for the idea of reincarnation, it seems to me that Mr. Power's letter gives a travesty, almost a caricature. Let me quote some sublime lines from the *Bhagavadgita*:

Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never.

Never was time it was not; end and beginning are dreams.

Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever.

Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems.

And:

The end of birth is death; the end of death is birth.

REGINALD MERTON

Broom Hill House,
Boars Hill, Oxford.

SIR,

Mr. Reginald Merton has completely misunderstood my letter and seems not to have read the previous correspondence.

The idea of God 'putting non-Christians back into the world to give them a second chance' is not mine at all. I took it from the letter by a reincarnationist which I was criticising!

I did not say and do not believe that Christianity has a monopoly of truth—it is quite alarming to find so sharp an attack made on one for views one

does not agree with. On the contrary, I believe that God has revealed Himself through Socrates, through Sakyamuni, through Confucius and through Gandhi, to name only a few, as well as through the Old Testament prophets and through all whose lives reveal in different measures the goodness or truth or beauty of God.

But in Christ only do I find in full perfection the love of the God who is Love. There is grace and truth in others, but I have found no other 'full of grace and truth.' I do not see that this faith is more dogmatic than Mr. Merton's claim to be an agnostic.

I quite agree that parts of the *Bhagavadgita* are sublime. I would not dream of mocking it. It is some reincarnationists and their arguments that I find funny, just as I find some of my fellow-Christians and myself funny at times.

Mr. Bray states that metempsychosis is the only explanation of genius. I can only say that geneticists who have studied these matters have other ideas. Of course believers in *Karma* say that there is continuity of 'the spirit' apart from its guilt, but when memory and personality are taken away it is hard to see what is left. It is like taking away the oxygen and hydrogen from a pond and saying that the dirt is the water.

Mr. Bray confuses the ideas of original sin and original guilt. The two things are very different. It is true that many Christians hold some doctrine of 'original sin' (variously interpreted), but that is not original guilt and it is not *Karma*.

Reincarnation is incompatible with Christianity for reasons that go deeper than its practical effects, its attitude to women, and so on.

This doctrine of *Karma*, which Sakyamuni inherited from Hindooism, is the natural result of the Hindoo doctrine of *Maya*—illusion. All ordinary human activities (including love), all material things, all history belong to this realm of *Maya*, and so does the 'individual self.'

Hindooism (including Buddhism) is therefore utterly world-renouncing. *Nirvana* is only reached by abandonment of all desire (including love) and finally even self. Christianity, on the contrary, is world-affirming. It sees purpose in creation ('and God saw that it was good'), purpose in history, purpose in the world (as a potential province of the Kingdom of God), and purpose in human life and human love.

The whole question is brilliantly discussed and its wider implications clarified in *The Buddha and the Christ* by B. H. Streeter. Pages 280-305 are especially apt to this correspondence.

Finally, may I ask why Western reincarnationists are so pleased about it? Do they not know that to the Buddhist reincarnation is the primaevael curse?

N. S. POWER

Immanuel Vicarage, 28 Maypole Lane,
Birmingham 14.

SHAKESPEARE AND REINCARNATION

SIR,

Mr. Tindall Hart politely side-steps out of a puddle into a pool. He says of Shakespeare, 'his own beliefs, of course, were very different,' and then he quotes the words of a despairing murderer when told of the death of his accomplice-wife. But what of Hamlet?

'To die, to sleep;
To sleep; perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, ...'

Nobody knows what Shakespeare believed. This has been repeated by all our greatest critics. For instance, Matthew Arnold :

'Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and are still,
Out-topping knowledge . . .'

And Browning says sceptically, that, *if* he unlocked his heart, 'the less Shakespeare he.'

F. J. O. CODDINGTON

January 23rd, 1950.

THE BOOK OF UNCOMMON PRAYER

SIR,

I have just finished reading *The Book of Uncommon Prayer* by the Rev. Frank W. Moyle. It is most impressive, and I hope it will be widely read, and that every owner of a copy will lend it to friends and neighbours, so that this newly exposed facet of our ancient Gospel may flash its light and beauty across our pathetic world and revive it.

Those words are not an exaggeration, and I would earnestly beg all who read this letter to *read* the book, and not only to 'glance' at it. To glance at it may cause you to think—Oh! someone picking the Prayer Book to pieces; while to read it all will provoke the reaction—Here is something constructive, something true, something worth thinking about seriously.

All through the book, as he unfolds each idea, the author refers to some part of our Lord's teaching, or to some worthy exponent of that teaching. I was much struck by the worth of the men whose words he quotes.

If our Prayer Book and church services were modified on the principles Mr. Moyle suggests, the terrible percentage of non-church-goers might in a few years be considerably altered.

Apart, however, from its use as regards church services, this book is of inestimable value to all who do pastoral work among our people—work, remember, which must be carried on among the men and women of *to-day*. Hitherto Tradition has been the only possible answer, if it can rightly be called an answer, to the questions and doubts and difficulties met with so frequently in such work. Now, the pastor can go forth to help, and with Truth instead of Tradition in his right hand, to tell of the God Who is Love.

The sheer beauty of many of the expressions in our Prayer Book and hymns makes it hard, very hard, to consider throwing any of them aside, but Truth as far as we know it to-day demands even that sacrifice.

May I quote a few words from one of the first pages in Mr. Moyle's book—it is itself a quotation from Thornton Wilder :

'It is the law of life that all things grow and change, casting aside the husks that protected their origins and emerging into fairer and nobler forms. It is so that the Immortal Gods have ordained it.'

I. SOMERS NEILL

P.S.—The above book would be excellent for study circles whether of clerical or lay folk. It is very clearly written, and it is stimulating.

Perthshire.

January 25th, 1950.

SIR,

May I supplement your notice of the *Book of Uncommon Prayer*. I find myself unable to agree with Mr. F. W. Moyle when he asserts that the writer of the Fourth Gospel 'has winnowed the philosophic wheat from the historical chaff.'

Christianity is, I think, first a historical religion: 'Its philosophy and its theology must be loyal to its history.'

There are some curious misprints in the book: on page 115 the 'ungodly' appear as the 'ungoldly,' on page 147 'or discipline' makes nonsense and apparently 'discipline or' is intended. On page 176 the absence of a comma after Major, implies that Rev. Dr. T. W. Manson is a gallant gentleman; on page 219 Keat's should be either Keats' or Keats's; on page 175 Mark I³⁸ is cited as Mark II.

Page 152 seems to be oblivious of the fact that Dr. Bouquet has issued *A Lectionary of Christian Prose* (Longmans Green. 1939. 10/6.)

May I emphasise in conclusion that *The Book of Uncommon Prayer* is especially valuable in its treatment of the Catechism, the Churching and Marriage Services, as also in its appendix to chapter vii on hymns.

E. GILBERT WOOD

Beckbury Rectory,
Shifnal, Shropshire.

CHARLES FREER ANDREWS

SIR,

In the December *Modern Churchman* your able reviewer writes concerning Charles Freer Andrews with an authority born of intimate personal knowledge. And yet is there not something to add?

Andrews took first class honours in the Classical Tripos at Cambridge, and subsequently first class honours with distinction in the Theological Tripos. It is on record that during his years at the Pembroke College Mission in South London he refused offers of a Fellowship from three different colleges because he was so happy in the work he had chosen. Later he returned to Cambridge as Vice-Principal of Westcott House, and finally he was elected to a Fellowship at Pembroke College itself, where he became Tutor in Theology.

Years afterwards, in recognition of his work in India, Andrews was elected an honorary Fellow of Pembroke College, and the Regius Professor of Divinity, who was allowed by statute to appoint someone 'of distinction' to give special lectures, nominated this eminent intellectual son of Cambridge.

None of these important facts is mentioned by your reviewer, who says of Andrews: 'He was never a modernist of the intellectual type.' And again: 'His judgments were generally prompted more by generosity of heart than by clearness of thought.'

I should not have thought it possible that a man with such a background could be led to his profession of modernism on purely emotional grounds, and I for one, have been deeply impressed by the reasons he has given for the positions which he took up. Many, nurtured in orthodoxy, will doubtless feel the same.

Marston Hall, Grantham.

J. R. H. THOROLD

February 21st, 1950.

ROBERT EISLER, Ph.D., D.Sc., D.Litt.

SIR,

The death of Dr. Robert Eisler on December 17th, 1949, has robbed international scholarship of one of its most interesting figures. Born in Vienna in 1882, he expressed in himself that rich cosmopolitan culture which characterises Austria at its best. Although essentially a scholar of encyclopaedic interests, Dr. Eisler lived an active life and one full of vicissitudes—he served in the Austrian Army during the first World-War, he was Assistant Chief of the League of Nations Universities Inter-Relations Office, he suffered Nazi imprisonment in the Buchenwald and Dachau camps, and he died a refugee in England but still retaining his Austrian nationality. His life, too, was a spiritual odyssey, for, through a temporary acceptance of the Roman Catholic faith, he passed to what may be best described as a sincere Christian individualism, based on wide learning and deep reflection.

Dr. Eisler produced books on economics, finance, bibliography, art, philosophy, archaeology, biblical research, and astrology. He wrote and lectured in several European languages, being honoured with invitations to speak at many universities and learned societies both on the Continent and in England. His works are all characterised by profound erudition and originality of thought, but it was this latter quality which so often provoked fierce controversy and earned for him, with the supporters of more orthodox views, a certain unfortunate reputation.

To Christian scholarship Dr. Eisler's biblical studies are naturally the more important. His *magnum opus* in this field was his ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΑΣ (2 Baende, Heidelberg, 1929-30), which appeared in an abbreviated English version in 1931 under the title of *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist*. This work set forth a completely new interpretation of the origins of Christianity; its basic premise being that all the relevant extant sources, whether Christian, Jewish, or pagan, had been either deliberately written or subsequently altered to support the now traditional view of the beginnings of the faith. The chief piece of evidence which Dr. Eisler produced in support of this thesis was a Slavonic or Old Russian version of Josephus' *War of the Jews*, which had originally been brought to the notice of European scholars in 1906 by A. Berendts. According to Dr. Eisler's view this Slavonic translation represented the original text of Josephus' work before it had been tampered with by Christian censors. Consequently, a passage concerning one described as the *Wonder-Worker* was to be interpreted as referring to Jesus, and, since this *Wonder-Worker* was shown as closely associated with a revolutionary movement against Rome, the suggestion naturally followed that Christianity was originally a Jewish politico-religious movement to overthrow the Roman government of Judaea. Pursuing this clue, Dr. Eisler searched through a mass of what he considered to be relevant data of a most extraordinary kind, finding therein what he believed to be further evidence, or indications of evidence, of the original political nature of the primitive Christian movement.

This thesis naturally provoked vigorous reaction among European and American scholars, whether Christian, Jewish or free-thinking, and a stream of reviews, articles and books by the most eminent authorities, including Professors M. Goguel¹ and J. M. Creed² and Dr. J. W. Jack,³ attests the

¹ *Jésus et la Messianisme politique. Examen de la théorie de M. Robert Eisler*. Paris 1931.

² 'The Slavonic Version of Josephus' History of the Jewish War,' article in *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. xxv, Oct., 1932.

³ *The Historic Christ (An Examination of Dr. Robert Eisler's Theory according to the Slavonic Version of Josephus and other Sources)*, London, 1933.

seriousness with which it was viewed. The general trend of criticism was decidedly against Dr. Eisler, but he did receive a certain measure of support from the late Dr. H. St. John Thackeray, undoubtedly the then greatest authority on Josephine studies,⁴ and from Dr. S. Reinach, the distinguished French classical scholar.⁵

A fair verdict on this great body of controversy would seem to be that, while many of what may be termed the subsidiary conclusions of Dr. Eisler have been shown to be unsound, his main points have not been properly faced, probably owing to the fact that an adequate *critique* demands a rare combination of expert knowledge in Christian Origins, rabbinics and Slavonic studies. Indeed the real nature of the Slavonic version of Josephus still remains to be accounted for, the significance of the thorough-going Christian censorship of Jewish and pagan writings needs yet to be properly appreciated, while the curious silence maintained in the relevant New Testament documents about the Jewish cause against heathen Rome demands a more acute examination than has hitherto been given to it.⁶ Dr. Eisler himself was keenly concerned to meet the objections advanced by his critics: he had published an interim reply at considerable length in 1938 under the title of *Flavius Josephus-Studien, I. Das Testimonium Flavianum. Eine Antwort an Dr. Walter Bienert*, and he was in the course of preparing a longer statement for a second edition of his *ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ*.

Two other books of Dr. Eisler call for a brief note here. *The Enigma of the Fourth Gospel (Its Author and its Writer)*, which was published in England in 1938, may perhaps best be evaluated as an interesting example of what the sparse and obscure data of Christian Origins will allow by way of a reasoned interpretation. *The Royal Art of Astrology* (1946) was an erudite survey of the antiquity and complexity of a cult which still continues to attract devotees and a useful exposition of its absurdities.⁷

In conclusion, the present writer would like to put on record his testimony to the great courtesy and unfailing kindness of Dr. Robert Eisler in advising and assisting with the loan of rare monographs one whose views he knew did not coincide with his own in several important respects. And to him it is also a significant and pleasing fact that it was *The Modern Churchman* which published the last of Dr. Eisler's contributions to Biblical studies in its issue of September, 1949.⁸

S. G. F. BRANDON

Klagenfurt, Austria.

February 20th, 1950.

MODERN CHURCHMEN'S CONFERENCE

1950

The thirty-third annual Conference of Modern Churchmen will be held at Girton College, Cambridge, in the week beginning August 14. Apply for particulars to Miss Irene Walker, Churchill Court, near Bristol (Hon. Sec. of the Conference).

⁴ Dr. St. John Thackeray printed the relevant passages in the third volume of his edition of Josephus in the *Loeb Classical Library* (1928).

⁵ See his *Orpheus*, Eng. trans., London, 1931.

⁶ The present writer attempts a solution of these problems in his forthcoming book *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*. (S.P.C.K., London.)

⁷ The book was reviewed in *The Modern Churchman*, vol. xxxviii, pp. 137-8.

⁸ 'Hebrew Scrolls: Further Evidence for their pre-Christian Date,' vol. xxxix, pp. 284-7.